

THEISM IN NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA,
VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND DVAITA:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled ‘**THEISM IN NYĀYA – VAIŚEṢIKA, VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND DVAITA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**’ is an authentic record of research work carried out by **LEKHA V.N**, in the Department of Nyaya (Faculty of Indian Logic) in the Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, under my guidance and supervision and that no part of the thesis has been presented before for the award of any other degree, diploma, fellowship, title or recognition.

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DECLARATION

I Lekha V.N., Research Scholar, Department of Sanskrit Nyaya, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, hereby declare that this thesis "THEISM IN NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA, VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND DVAITA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY" submitted for the award of Ph.D Degree in Sanskrit, is my original research work. I further declare that this thesis has not been submitted to any other University or Academic body for the award of any Degree or Diploma.



Place : Kalady

Lekha V.N.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Ahs	- Ahirbudhnya Samhita
A.P	- Agnipurāṇa
A.S	- Advaitasiddhi
A.V	- Anuvyākhyāna
B.G	- Bhagvad Gītā
Br.Up	- Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
BS	- Brahma Sūtra
BSMB	- Brahmasūtra Madhva Bhāṣya
BSRB	- Brahma Sūtra Rāmānuja Bhāṣya
BSSB	- Brahma Sūtra Śaṅkara Bhāṣya.
Ch.Up	- Chāndogya Upaniṣad
FVV	- Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta
Ga.Bh	- Gadyatrayabhāṣya
GBR	- Gītābhāṣya of Rāmānuja
GBM	- Gītābhāṣya of Madhva
I.P	- Indian Philosophy
Īśa.Up	- Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad.
Kaṭh.Up	- Kaṭhōpaniṣad
L.T	- Lakṣmi Tantra
Muṇ.Up	- Muṇḍakopaniṣad

MBH	-	Mahābhārata
N.Bh	-	Nyāya Bhāṣya
ND	-	Nyāya Darśana
NK	-	Nyāyakandali
NKS	-	Nyāya Kusumāñjali
NM	-	Nyāya Mañjari
NMr	-	Nyāyāmṛta
NS	-	Nyāyasūtra
N.Sa	-	Nyāyasāra
N.Si	-	Nyāyasiddhāñjanam
N.Su	-	Nyāyasudha
N.S.M	-	Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvali
N.V	-	Nyāyavārtika
N.V.T.T	-	Nyāyavārtikatātparyatīka
Pr.Bh	-	Prāśastapādabhāṣya
PSPM	-	The Prābhākara School of Pūrvamīmāṃsa
R.V	-	Ṛgveda
S.Bh.	-	Śrīmad Bhāgavata
S.Br	-	Śathapatha Brāhmaṇa
SDS	-	Sarvadarśanasamgraha
Śv.Up	-	Śvetāśvetara Upaniṣad.

SSB	- Sāmkhyasūtrabhāṣya
SP	- Śrutaprakāśika
Tai.Up	- Taittirīya Upaniṣad
Tn.Up	- Taittirīya Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad
Tat.Di	- Tattvadīpika
TBh	- Tarkabhāṣa
TCI	- Tattvacintāmaṇi (Īśvarānumāna)
TS	- Tarkasaṃgraha
TSD	- Tarkasaṃgrahadīpika
Tv.S	- Tattvasaṃkhyāna
VK	- Vedāntakaustubha
VKAS	- Vedāntakaustubha - A Study
VS	- Vaiśeṣika Sūtra
VSa	- Vedārtha Saṃgraha
VP	- Viṣṇupurāṇa
VTV	- Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya
VTV.Ti	- Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya Tīka
YMD	- Yatīndramatadīpika
YS	- Yoga Sūtra
YSBh	- Yoga Sūtra Bhāṣya

I

INTRODUCTION

The thesis “THEISM IN NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA, VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND DVAITA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY” tries to expose and compare the theistic positions upheld by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*, four great Philosophical Schools of India. It is true that enormous studies on the various philosophical aspects highlighted by these schools have already been undertaken by scholars of these systems. But it seems that those writers had never attempted a comparative study on the theme of theism presented in these systems. It is true that there are studies on theism in various Indian Philosophical systems. Those attempts treated theism in various schools separately. But so far no one has attempted a comparative study on the theme of theism in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*. This thesis is thus a new venture in explaining and comparing theistic positions presented by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*. By this attempt it also hopes to contribute to the vast study on theism in the great Indian Philosophical traditions.

1 THE OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE THESIS

Theism is the philosophical attempt to probe into the nature and characteristics of the Divine revealed in the human life situations. From their very beginnings the philosophical schools those emerged in the

whole world were especially inquisitive about the amazing aspects of human life such as the strong desire of human heart for the transcendence. It seems to us that the relation between the Divine and the human is one of the pertinent themes of the philosophical enquiries throughout the world both ancient and modern. Philosophers sought after the characteristics of the Divine in their philosophical enterprise.

Generally speaking, philosophical views on theism were closely linked to the religious traditions both in the east and the west. It seems that philosophical enquiries about theism in India are especially inseparable from the religious traditions with which human life is knotted so closely. We can easily note that almost all the philosophical schools in ancient India, excepting *Cārvakas*, aimed at a wholistic enquiry into the truth of the human life. We see that as religious aspect cannot be separated from the day-today affairs of a person's life, it quite naturally turns to be one of the cardinal subjects of intellectual pursuit in India.

Many studies had already been produced with regard to the theistic traditions of India. We can note that in the contemporary academic field there is a renewed interest in the views of ancient philosophical schools about theism. It is in the background of this contemporary intellectual pursuit that this thesis sketches its scope and objective. It seems that so far no serious attempt is made by the academicians in the line of comparing theistic traditions highlighted by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* schools. Situating itself in

the background of the renewed interest in the theistic traditions of ancient India among the contemporary academicians, this thesis ventures the attempt to compare the theistic traditions of the four major philosophical schools of India.

2 THE METHOD AND PROCEDURE OF THE THESIS

In order to pursue its objective this thesis adopts the expository method as its method of study. An expository method elaborately deals with its subject matter and closely analyses the various strands that jointly formulate the theme of enquiry. An expository method is most suitable in a study that compares the view points of different philosophical schools. It helps to find out both the similarities and dissimilarities of the views taken up by various schools of thought. By adopting the expository method this thesis compares the theistic positions taken up by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* schools.

This thesis divides its subject matter of study into five chapters. The title of the first chapter is ‘**An Over all view of Theistic Traditions in Indian Philosophy**’. This chapter highlights the routes and development of theistic positions originated from various ancient Indian traditions such as *Vedic Saṃhitās*, *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavad Gītā* and from the prevalent ancient Philosophical schools like *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga* and *Advaita*. In connection with the theistic positions in these traditions this study also makes an enquiry into the atheistic tradition in the *Mīmāṃsā* philosophy. This over all view on theism in Indian

philosophical traditions helps us to situate the major trends and patterns of Indian schools regarding their attention on theism.

Second chapter is ‘Theism in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika’. This chapter elaborately discusses the theistic position adopted by this System of thought. Gautama, the founder of *Nyāya* School briefly refers to God in a few aphorisms. Later *Nyāyīyikas* like Vātsyāyana, Udyotakara, Udayana, Gaṅgeśa and others are frankly theistic and elaborately discusses the proof for the existence and nature of God. The syncretic writers of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* schools are incorrigibly theistic. The *Nyāyīyikas* maintain that individual souls can attain liberation by the grace of God. Two main questions are discussed in the *Nyāya* literature with reference to its Theistic standpoints: 1) what are the proofs for the existence of God? And 2) what is the nature of God?

The title of the third chapter is ‘Theism in Viśiṣṭādvaita’. Rāmānuja’s Philosophy of Theism and his responses to the theistic positions of the opponent schools are explained in it in detail. To *Viśiṣṭādvaita* school *Viṣṇu* is the Supreme Being. *Viṣṇu* cannot be treated separately apart from Goddess *Śrī*. This chapter elaborately deals with also the nature and attributes of *Viṣṇu*. The notions of *Nitya vibhūthi* and *Jīva* are explained in it in relation to *Viṣṇu*. To *Viśiṣṭādvaitins*, *Viṣṇu*, the supreme goal of life is attained through the means of *prapatti*.

The fourth chapter, ‘Theism in Dvaita’ begins with a discussion on the theme of the knowability of God. It also elaborates on the idea of

the body of *Viṣṇu* by specifically emphasizing on the attributes of Him. Then it tries to explain the notions like origination and the dissolution of the world and *jīva* with reference to *Viṣṇu*. This chapter concludes the discussion by stating about *Dvaitins* explanations about *Viṣṇu* as the giver of liberation followed by an account on the source and nature of bondage.

The fifth chapter is titled as ‘A Comparative Analysis between the Theistic Positions in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita’. This chapter closely analyses the similarities and dissimilarities found in these four major philosophical traditions about theism.

It seems that all of these schools accept God as the creator of the universe. At the same time they have differences of opinion regarding the nature of God as the cause of creation. *Nyāya* and *Dvaita* hold that God is merely an efficient cause in creation. To *Viśiṣṭādvaita* God functions in creation as efficient, material and co-operative causes. Another aspect of similarity that we see among these schools is about the notion of *Adṛṣṭa*. All of them unanimously agree that God is the giver of the phala of karma. According to them *Īśvara* is the *adīṣṭa* of *Adṛṣṭa*.

Considering the authority of *Veda* also these schools hold differences of opinion. *Nyāya* regards *Īśvara* as the author of the *Veda*. According to them, *Veda* is the non-eternal creation of a person (*Pauruṣeya*). Here God is the authority of the *Veda*. To *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* God is not the author of the *Veda*. *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*,

Viśiṣṭādvaita and *Dvaita* unanimously consider God as the lord of the universe. They strongly consider *Īśvara* as *saguṇa* or qualified. They deny the *nirguṇa* or characterless *Brahman*. They hold that *Īśvara* is adorned with the attributes existence, knowledge and bliss.

By comparing the notion of God variously presented in these schools this thesis present the strong theistic traditions of India. By taking up this theme for study this thesis takes part in one of the strong currents of thought in Indian philosophy.

CHAPTER I

AN OVERALL VIEW OF THEISTIC TRADITIONS IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

This chapter is an attempt to present an overall view of Theistic traditions in Indian Philosophy. It tries to know the itinerary of the development of the notion of a Divine in major Indian Philosophical Systems. It is well known a fact that in India philosophical enquiry is closely linked to religious thrust of man. This position does not claim that religious questions were always predominant in Indian Philosophical traditions. Rather, it simply states that the Indian Philosophical traditions are open to religious questions also. While dealing with the perennial questions of human life, Indian seers were not hesitant to recognize the inner most quest of human heart for a divine aspect in it. This divine element in human life had been engaged with in different forms in manifold treatises of Indian Systems in different periods of history.

It is well known to us that the earliest document regarding Indian thought is the *Veda*. This chapter begins its enquiry about the development of the notion of God in the Indian thought by probing into the hymns of *Veda*. As we all know *Veda* is not a single work but rather a whole literature. This literature is usually considered as consisting of two parts, viz., *Mantras* and *Brāhmaṇās*. Several of the early *Upaniṣads* are included in the latter, but, on account of their great importance in

the history of Indian thought, they generally considered as a separate portion of the *Veda*. Broadly speaking, the three parts indicate the consecutive stages to the expansion of *Vedic* literature. They also stand for teachings that are more or less distinct. The demarcation of the exact chronological limits of their stages is always debatable. Even the duration of the *Vedic* period, as a whole is not definitely known. All that is certain about it is that the *Veda* proper, including the chief *Upaniṣads*, is older than *Buddha*, who is known to have died about 480 B.C. The later limit of the *Vedic* period thus accordingly is taken as 500 B.C. As regards the earlier limit, there is no unanimous agreement among scholars about it. The belief that is generally accepted is that 1200-1500 BC is the period of the formation of the *Vedas*.¹

1.1 Theism in the *Vedic Saṃhitās*, the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavadgītā*

Theism in the Saṃhitās : The word ‘*mantra*’ means ‘hymn’ or religious song. The hymns or religious songs contained in the *Veda* are of varying ages. The oldest of them being detached from the latest by several centuries. These hymns were at a later stage that is long after the period of their original composition

were brought together and have been kept in the form as available today as separate collections (*saṃhitā*). Several of these early hymns are so vague that it is difficult to expose them with satisfactory interpretations. This obscurity together with the incompleteness of the beliefs which prevailed in that age as a whole makes our attempt to understand properly the notion of God developed in that era. Hence we have to content ourselves with citing the views now commonly accepted by scholars about the theistic position of this period. The scholars of this period generally opine that these early *mantras* repeat a form of nature worship. In their opinion, this religion of nature was, in its essence, transplanted from their original home when the ancestors of the future *Āryans* immigrated into India.

In this religion of nature worship, the various powers of nature like fire (*agni*), wind (*vāyu*) and the sun (*sūrya*), around which man live and to whose influence he is constantly subject, are personified by the worshippers. The personification implies a belief that the order which is observable in the world, such as the regular succession of seasons or of day and night, is due to the agency of these natural powers. These natural powers are accordingly looked upon as higher beings or Gods, whom it is man's duty to obey and to propitiate. Hence the hymns may

generally be described as chants or prayers addressed to deified powers of nature. In these hymns deified powers of nature were described as responsible for the governance of the world. The gods thus worshipped in this period are many in number. Some of them like *Agni*, the God of fire, who is represented as the carrier of gifts are deities came to this land together with the occupation of Indian by the *Āryans*, while others, like *Uṣas*, or ‘dawn’, worshipped as a goddess and described as a blushing maiden pursued by her lover, the sun, are later creations by them in their new home. Although the *Vedic* Pantheon is quite large, we can observe that some deities, as they appear in the hymns that have been preserved are more important than others. But we may note by the way that *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*, the great Gods of later Hinduism, although not unknown to the age about which we talk, are not among the prominent deity figures of the time. Of the relatively more imposing deities, we can refer to two, viz., *Varuṇa* and *Indra*.²

Indra, is the leading deity of the hymn collections taken as a whole. He represents mainly valor and force. But he combines with those traits certain others, which one would not generally like to relate with the idea of the divine. He is presented in hymns as vain and boastful, and is fond of an intoxicating drink

extracted from a vine called Soma. When we read *Samhitā* it is easy to note that Indra holds so high a position among the *Vedic* Gods through some accidental circumstances. He is indicated in *Vedic* hymns as the ‘protector of the *Āryan* color’ and as the ‘destroyer of the dark skin’. These indications show that there was a historical necessity that arose for seeking the aid of a martial and self-assertive deity by the immigrant *Āryans* in conquering the hostile tribes who were prior inhabitants of the land which they had invaded. The descriptions of Indra as the ‘thunder God’ and as ‘the liberator of the waters by slaying the demon of thoughts’ indicate the disaster frequently played by famine in their new home, when Aryans arrived in India.

Indra, however, was not the sole type of divinity known to *Vedic Āryans*. There are references in these hymns to another important deity, Varuṇa³. He is presented as a god of righteousness. He is the guardian of all that is worthy and good. He is omniscient and is described as ever witnessing the truth and falsehood of men. The songs produced in his praise are some of the most sublime compositions in the *Veda*. But if we judge these hymns from their number in the collections as they have come down to us today, he is quite unimportant and he continued

ever after to be so, as shown for instance, from his position in the later *purāṇic* Pantheon where he is not the highest but merely a god of the sea. ⁴

There is an important aspect of the idea of divinity in this period to which we should call special attention. We can see that in this period the idea of divinity is intimately associated with what is described as *ṛta*. Etymologically the word *ṛta* means ‘course’. It originally meant ‘cosmic order’, the maintenance of which is described in hymns as the purpose of all the Gods. And later it also came to mean ‘right’, so that the gods were conceived as protecting the world not merely from physical disorder but also from moral chaos. The order of the universe in all its dimensions is protected by gods, because its control is in righteous hands. Of this principle of righteousness, hymns present Varuṇa as the chief support. According to *Vedic* hymns, He is the real trustee of the *ṛta*. But the other Gods also, not excluding Indra, show it in some degree or other. In fact the theism of the Vedic period is an exaltation of gods as the ‘guardians of *ṛta*’. This description is presented in the *Mantras* as a common epithet of the Gods. In hymns all of them are conceived as willing the right, and seeing to that will being

carried out in practice. The word *ṛta* has almost ceased to be used in Sanskrit. But we see that its nuances are carried out under the name of dharma. The same idea occupies a very important place in the later Indian views of life also.

According to these early *mantras*, the world is not only governed by the gods but also owes its existence to them. In hymns we see that gods are presented as the creators of the universe. The world is represented in hymns as consisting of three parts-heavens, the world of mortals and the intermediate region- each of which has its own guiding divinities. The relation of man to the gods is described by hymns as one of the complete dependence. But this dependence is of quite an intimate kind, for we find *Vedic Āryans* addressing their gods as ‘father’ and ‘brother’.

Theism in the *Brāhmaṇas*: The word *Brāhmaṇa* is derived from the root ‘*brahman*’. It means ‘prayer’ or ‘devotion’. It signifies an authoritative utterance of a priest, relating particularly to sacrifices. The *Brāhmaṇas* are so called because they are the collections of utterances relating to sacrifices. Generally speaking, we can see that the thought of the earlier hymns in this period are developing on three lines:

Monotheism, Monism, and Ritualism. The first two of these are often found mixed up with each other. But their conceptions about God are quite distinct. So scholars are generally describing them separately.

Monotheism via Henotheism: The characteristic feature of early *Vedic* religion was the belief in plurality of gods. But soon it lost its attraction. The *Vedic* Indian, dissatisfied with the old mythology began to long for simplicity of explanation so natural to man. He started upon seeking after not the causes of natural phenomena, but their first or ultimate cause. He became discontent to refer observed phenomena to a multiplicity of gods. Human striving to discover the one God that controls and rules over them all became prevalent in this period.

But we should remember that the conception of a unitary godhead which becomes explicit now had already implicitly lied in the thought of the earlier period. For due to the incomplete individualization of deities and the innate connection or mutual resemblance of one natural phenomenon with another (e.g., the Sun, Fire and the Dawn), there is in *Vedic* mythology what may be described as an overlapping of divinities. In earlier phase of *Vedic* thought one God is very much like another. Different

deities thus come to be presented in the same manner, and, except to the name in it, it is difficult to determine which god is intended to be praised in a hymn. The difficulty to determine the supremacy of a God is added in this period due to the well-known habit of the *Vedic* seers of highlighting the importance of the particular deity whom they are praising and representing it as supreme, ignoring for the time being the other gods altogether. To this phase of religious belief Max Muller gave the name of 'henotheism', i.e., belief in one God as distinguished from monotheism or belief in one only God. Regarding it as the human instinct for unity asserting itself unconsciously, Max Muller represents this habit of ancient seers marking a definite stage in the advance from polytheistic to monotheistic belief⁵.

We do not mention here all the Gods that successively become pre-eminent during this long period. But we have to refer to one of them, Prajāpati, the 'Father God', the most important of them all, who is presented in hymns as the personification of the creative power of nature. The description of hymns about the origin of this God is similar to that of the hymns describing the origin of Viśvakarman. His name is praised in hymns as 'lord of living beings' as the very name indicates. This name is first

applied in hymns as an epithet to Gods like *Savitṛ*, ‘the vivifer’. But later this name assumes the character of an independent deity which is responsible for the creation and governance of the universe. This God occupies the first place in the *Brāhmaṇas*. There are, one *Brāhmaṇa* says, thirty-three Gods and Prajāpati is the thirty-fourth including them all⁶. In the *Ṛgveda*, where the references to him are not many, there is quite a sublime description about him⁷. We see that such a deity should have satisfied the longing of any people after a Supreme God-head. The notion of Prajāpati might well have made up the goal in Indian search after unity in godhead.

Monism: When we examine the monotheistic conceptions given in *Vedic* hymns they are often found mixed up with monistic ones. It is a difficult task to sift the one from the other tendency. But by close scrutiny of certain passages, the one or the other view is seen to prevail. This justifies our attempt to describe them as two separate tendencies. Of these two tendencies, the pure monotheistic conception involves the tendency of dualism. This conception of God manifests only the unity of godhead. This represents the reduction of the many gods to one who is above and apart from the world which he makes and guides. This

position can easily be transformed into man's longing for unity, viz., and monism. This longing for unity in man traces the whole of existence to a single source. This quest for and the notion of unity is fully expressed in the *Upaniṣads*. But this tendency of monism is foreshadowed more than once in the literature preceding *Upaniṣads*. It represents some shades of such monistic thought. We can identify the pantheistic view in *Vedic* Literature that precedes *Upaniṣads*, which identifies nature with God. One of its most sophisticated expressions is found in a passage of the *Ṛgveda* where goddess Aditi (the Boundless) is identified with all gods and all men, with the sky and air in fact with 'whatever has been or whatever shall be'⁸. The central point of the pantheistic view is to deny the difference between God and nature. God is presented in it not as transcending nature but as immanent in it.⁹ The pantheistic view holds that the world does not proceed from God, but is itself God. Although the aim of this view is to suggest unity, it preserves both the notions of God and nature and so far fails to satisfy the mind in its search after true unity.

Nature and man alike are the subject matter of Philosophical speculation. The external world, whose reality is

never questioned in Indian thought, is looked upon as an ordered whole, divided into the three realms of earth, the atmospheric region and heaven, each guided and illumined by its own specific deities. We can assume that it is to explain the cosmic character of the world that the several nature- gods are invented later by Indian mind. The gods may be many, but the world they govern is one. This idea of unity naturally comes to be emphasized with the growth of monotheistic and monistic beliefs.

Ritualism: As we look into the hymns of *Vedic* literature it seems that together with the theistic positions there was an attempt to develop the complexities of ritualism in ancient periods. Although it is not directly linked to our theme, it has got the importance of implying the practical situations of theistic conceptions of the time. It is easy to note that the purpose of invoking the several gods of nature was at first mostly to gain their favor for success in life here as well as hereafter. The prayers were naturally accompanied by simple gifts like grain and ghee. But this simple form of worship became more and more complicated in later times. This situation gave rise to elaborate sacrifices and also to a special class of professional priests who alone, it was believed, could officiate at them. There are references in the later *Vedic* hymns to rites which lasted for

very long periods, and at which several priests were employed by the sacrifice. The *Brāhmaṇas* in which this elaborate ritualism is taught, altogether subordinated the earlier *mantrās* to it. They do indeed utilize them, but often retrieving them from their original context and significance. The importance of the probing into the theism of *Upaniṣads* is highlighted only when it is explained at the backdrop of ritualism of the time.

Theism in the *Upaniṣads*: In this section we take up the theistic consideration of the *Upaniṣads*. The word *Upaniṣad* literally means ‘secret teaching’ (*rahasya*) or the teaching which was guarded from the unworthy and was imparted, in private, only to pupils of strong character. This word has since come to be applied also to the treatises which embody such teachings. The number of these treatises, as commonly supposed, is very large; but only about a dozen of them can be classed as genuine parts of Vedic literature.

The *Upaniṣads* form the fountain-head of all the later *Vedāntic* systems of thought. The ultimate reality accepted in the *Upaniṣadic* literature in general is called *Brahman*. This *Brahman* is of the nature of existence, knowledge and bliss.¹⁰ It is self-existent: it does not depend upon anything else for its existence.

It is of the nature of consciousness. Yājñavalkya, one of the great minds of ancient India, says that just as a lump of salt has no inner or outer part but consists entirely of savor, so in truth, the self has no inner or outer part but consists entirely of knowledge.¹¹ It is of the nature bliss also. The *Bṛ.Up* says: this is the supreme bliss. *Brahman* is free from all the limitations of space, time and causality. The description of *Brahman* as ‘indivisible’ implies that it is independent of space, because all that is in space is divisible. That *Brahman* is not limited by time is indicated by such descriptions as he is ‘the lord of past and future’, ‘the creator of time’, ‘exalted above the three times’ etc. Causality is nothing but the universal principle of change. But Brahman, being *akṣara* or changeless and imperishable, cannot be subject to causality. According to *Upaniṣads*, it is above causality.

Brahman is described as *nirguṇa* or devoid of empirical attributes. He is explained by *Upaniṣads* as devoid of all relations and definitions. It is not like anything of our experience and, hence, it is imperceptible, inconceivable and inexpressible. Accordingly, it is held that *Brahman* cannot be characterized in any way known to us. It can be indicated only negatively as

‘*neti-neti*’ ‘not this, not this’.¹² And since *Brahman* is not like anything known to us, it is sometimes called *asaṭ*, i.e., non-existent, which actually means that the ultimate, being not an object of our empirical knowledge, ‘seems to be non-existent’.¹³ This expression renders the idea that the absolute is that ‘where words origin, along with the mind, come back, without being able to comprehend it’.¹⁴

The impossibility of conceiving *Brahman* by means of ordinary knowledge is indicated by *Upaniṣads* through such contradictory expressions as: ‘it is the greatest of the great and the smallest of the small.’¹⁵ It is stable, yet it is the speediest’, ‘it moves, yet it does not move’, ‘it lies near, yet it is the furthest’¹⁶ and so on. The implication of all these contradictory statements is that *Brahman* does not admit of any empirical descriptions ordinarily available to us.

Along with the notion of *nirguṇa Brahman* there are also passages in the *Upaniṣads*, which advocate the doctrine of the qualified *Brahman*. The doctrine that *Brahman* as the inner controller of the world of matter and spirit and that all the elements of the world are under its inviolable commands gives rise to the concept of *Brahman* as that which governs the world

and endowed with incomprehensible qualities. Thus, in some passages of the *Upaniṣads* *Brahman* is described as endowed with the acts of creation, sustenance and destruction of the world.¹⁷ There it is described as endowed with the qualities of omniscience and omnipotence, which are pre-requisites for the cosmic activities.

In many passages of the *Upaniṣads* we can see that the individual self is identified with the ultimate reality. Thus passages like ‘that-thou art’, ‘The self is *Brahman*’, ‘All is *Brahman*’ etc. declare the identity between the individual self and *Brahman*. There are also passages which speak of differences between the self and *Brahman*. The renowned simile of two birds says that though both the birds rest on the same tree, one of them tastes the fruits and experiences joys and sorrows, while the other does not taste them, but simply looks on.¹⁸ Here, the first bird represents the individual self and the second the Absolute. The difference between the self and *Brahman* is supported also by such passages as, ‘He who controls the self from within’, ‘Having entered into the heart, the lord becomes the ruler of the creatures’, ‘The *Jīva* is less powerful, dependent and inferior’ and so on.¹⁹ There are also passages which declare

that the selves are produced from *Brahman* like sparks of a blazing fire.²⁰

The *Upaniṣads* do not support the idea of an omnipotent mechanic rationality that forms the world out of some pre-existing matter. According to *Upaniṣads*, the world is just a manifestation from within the being of the supreme reality. *Brahman* is both the material cause and the efficient cause of the world. Just as strands come forth from a spider and return into it, so all beings come out of *Brahman* and return into it.²¹ Thus, the world is only a manifestation of the Highest Reality, the *Brahman*. Accordingly, the world as we perceive it has no ultimate reality. The *Ch.Up* says that just as effects like jar etc. are false, while clay, the cause, is real, so the world being an effect is false, while *Brahman*, the cause, is real. It is also said in the *Ch.Up*. that there is no multiplicity because everywhere the same *Brahman* exists.²²

Based on the afore-mentioned descriptions about *Brahman* and *ātman* we can see the place of theism in the *Upaniṣads*. The notion of God has not been developed in the *Upaniṣads*, like the conception of Prajāpati for instance, from the polytheism of the *mantras*, rather it is directly derived from the *Brahman-ātman*

conception. In tune with this conception the supreme God is taken to be immanent in all that constitutes the universe, including gods and men. This fact is indicated by the name generally given to it in the *Upaniṣads*, viz., *Īśa* or *Īśvara* (Lord) who lives as the ‘inner guide’ (*antaryāmin*) in all objects in the universe.²³ *Īśvara* in this sense can be understood only as the personified form of Brahman. The term *Īśvara* does not signify in the *Upaniṣads* a creator other than the created, as God is conceived in monotheism. In the *Upaniṣads* the term *Īśvara* functions only as a principle which is eventually one with its creation. We can express this fact in the terminology of later *Vedānta* such that God is conceived here as the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. We can note in the teachings of the *Upaniṣads* that this personified conception of *Brahman* often passes without hesitation into the field of the Absolute.

Following the footsteps of the theistic position of the *Upaniṣads* there is a personal form of theism slowly develops in the post *Vedic* period. Prajāpati, the chief god of the *Brāhmaṇas*, came in later times to be regarded as a secondary deity under the designation of *Brahmā* (masc). The essential identity between the two conceptions explains the fact that *Brahmā* also is sometimes

represented as the supreme God in the literature of these times. That is the case, for example, in the *Mahābharatha*. But such representation of him significantly occurs mostly in those portions of the epic which are the earliest among its theistic sections. This phenomenon implies that his supremacy, once recognized explicitly, declined gradually. His place is, in course of time, taken by two other deities, viz., *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*. We can easily note that during the period of the epic as a whole, it is they that occupy the prominent position.

In fact these gods are older than Prajāpati. To speak generally, they seemed to occupy in the beginning very important position among pantheon. Their conception in Vedic hymns was generally personal in character.²⁴ Their personal character becomes more and more obvious as they get eminence, so that they finally come to represent a conception of the supreme godhead similar to that of Varuṇa in the early mantras. We see that the history of this personal theism, subsequent to the decline of Varuṇa worship, is lost in the course of time. But we can deduce from the fact of the continuance of a personal theism later that it could not have wholly disappeared from history. It should have remained mostly a belief of the common people, as theism in general still continues to be; and it was probably under

the influence of that belief that the two deities, Śiva and Viṣṇu came to be completely personified. In their fully developed form, both Śiva and Viṣṇu are described as gods among the gods (*deva-deva*) or gods above the gods (*devādhideva*); and each has a personality so clearly sketched that it is impossible for either to be identified with the other. This distinctness explains, at least in part, the generally sectarian character of theism in the present period²⁵.

Śaivism: This is the doctrine in which Śiva is conceived as the supreme God. The beginnings of the conception of this deity can be traced back to the early hymns, where we find Rudra as the personification of the destructive powers of nature as represented in storms and lightning. The name Rudra literally means ‘howler’. The hymns devoted to him in the *R̥gveda* are only a very few. But some of the traits, clearly ascribed to Śiva in later times are already found mentioned in them, such as his dwelling in the mountains, his having braided hair and his wearing a hide etc. In later stages he is represented as the patron and the pattern of ascetics. Due to his generally terrific character, he was invoked in those early times in order that he might become auspicious or Śiva. This name ‘Śiva’ becomes his distinctive

designation in the later portions of the *Veda*. There he is described as the great God (*Mahādeva*). In the *Śv.Up*, he holds the same prominent position as it were in the early hymns. In this *Upaniṣad* he is declared to be knowable through loving devotion. The *Upaniṣad* also states that divine grace is needed for salvation. It thus explicitly introduces a characteristic tenet of all personal theism, viz., the grace of God and its necessary counterpart, man's devotion to him.

Vaiṣṇavism : This is the creed in which *Viṣṇu* is worshipped as the supreme God. As already stated, *Viṣṇu* like *Śiva* is a *Vedic* deity. He is represented in the mantras as one of the solar deities and, as such, is associated with light and life. He is designated in the epic as the son of *dharma*. This designation implies that the conception is not cosmic alone, but also pre-eminently ethical in character.

There is an extra element other to the early Vedic hymns and personal theistic tendencies sprang from it that mark the beginnings of personal theistic worship, which plays an important part in the origin of *Vaiṣṇavism*. There is a strong opinion among scholars that it is derived from a non-*Vedic*, though not a non-*Āryan*, source. The hypothesis is that some

times before *Buddha* and *Mahāvīra*, the last prophet of Jainism, there seems to have arisen in the North-West of India a religious reformer, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, son of *Vāsudeva*, who preached a theistic faith. The supreme God as conceived in it, who was termed ‘*Bhagavān*’ (the worshipful), was of the Varuṇa type a God equally exalted morally and otherwise also equally worthy of worship. It soon assumed a sectarian complexion in the form of *Bhāgavata* religion. Later it was adapted into the personal theistic conception of *Viṣṇu*.

Theism in the *Bhagavadgītā* : B.G. literally means ‘The Lord’s song’. It is the philosophical discourse of Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to persuade the reluctant Arjuna to fight. It is the most popular and sacred book of the Hindus and is contained in the *Bhīṣma-Parva* of the *MBH*.

The B.G tries to construct a philosophy of *karma* based on *jñāna* and supported by *Bhakti* in a beautiful manner. It represents a unique synthesis of Action, Devotion and Knowledge. The thought in the B.G about man is that he is a complex system of intellect, will and emotion. The aspect of intellect has given rise to the philosophy of knowledge; will to the philosophy of action, and emotion to the philosophy of

devotion. All these three (knowledge action and devotion), according to the teachings of the B.G, ultimately stand synthesized. This synthesis is known as '*Yoga*'. The literal meaning of the word *Yoga* is union, i.e, the union of the individual with the absolute. *Yoga* signifies the equanimity or balance of mind (*samatva*). It aims at the higher perspective of action that comes through detachment. The *Yogi* is the ideal ascetic who curbs his passions and maintains calmness in cold and heat, in joy and sorrow, in honor and dishonor ²⁶. The B.G 's theistic position is closely linked to its views on *Yoga*.

The *Yoga* is essentially the path of knowledge. The *Yogi's* ideal self- realization cannot be attained without knowledge. The B.G holds the view that even the devotees are granted knowledge by the Lord. It is only with the help of the Lord that devotees may realize their goal.²⁷ *Yoga* bereft of knowledge, is impossibility. A higher realm of knowledge is required for the possession of *Yogic* experience. We may weaken the power of the senses by abstaining from necessities but unless we rise above the enjoyment of the fruits of action and the desire for it, the psychological attachment to the sense objects, we are not true *Yogīs*. And this relish can go away only with the rise of true

knowledge.²⁸ The higher position to where the B.G places knowledge can be seen from the following statement: ‘Even the most sinful man can cross over the ocean of *samsāra* by means of the boat of knowledge alone. As a fire well-kindled reduce fuel to ashes, so the fire of knowledge reduces all actions to the ashes. The culmination of action is in knowledge. Having obtained knowledge, one soon embraces peace. There is nothing purer than knowledge’.²⁹ In the B.G the knower is identified by the Lord with his own self.³⁰

According to the position of the B.G, the *Karmayoga* is not opposed to the *jñānayoga*. In fact, the former is possible only when the latter is attained. We know that no embodied being can completely renounce actions.³¹ The Universe itself depends on actions. Inertia is not liberty. Actions keep up the cycle of the Universe and it is the duty of every individual to help it. He who does not do so and finds pleasure in the senses is sinful and lives in vain.³²

The ideal of the B.G is not negativism, asceticism or escapism. It does not preach the gospel of the negation of actions. Rather it stands for the performance of actions in a detached spirit. It is not *Naiṣkarmya*, but *Niṣkāma-karma*. It

highlights the giving up not of action itself, but of interest, desire, fruit- attachment associated with action. Desire binds a man's life to its actions. He should therefore act in such a way that action does not bind him. The B.G synthesizes both *pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*. According to it, actions are our sphere of life; fruits are not our concern. We should never be attached to the fruits of actions and at the same time we should never be inactive also.³³ In the B.G's view without true knowledge renunciation of desire and attachment is not possible. Hence only a true *jñāni* can perform *niṣkāma- karma*. Therefore the B.G says: Only fools and not- wise people speak of *jñāna* and *karma* as different and opposed; really they are one.³⁴

There is yet another view in the B.G, which explains the nature of devotee from the standpoint of theism which forms as important an aspect of the B.G-teaching as above stated absolutism. According to this view, one should perform one's duties for the fulfillment of God's purpose. By fulfilling God's purpose one joins with God in forwarding the Universal life. As in the previous view, here also the duties that a person has to perform are those of his station in life. But he should do them, subordinating his will completely and whole heartedly to

the divine will. This is performed by dedicating all work to the Lord ³⁵ . It is the *bhakti-Yoga* or the way of devotion. By thus working for the Lord, he renounces the fruits commonly associated with duties. He thereby purifies his heart. Here the salvation is achieved through the grace of God rather than *jñāna*. This teaching has decidedly a stronger appeal to common people with their simple trust in a personal God.

Bhakti or devotion is defined in the *B.G* as disinterested service to God. So it is a form of *karma*. And disinterested action, as we have already seen, is not possible without knowledge. Hence *Bhakti* too, like *Niṣkāma-karma*, can be performed only by a true *jñāni*. Only he can completely give himself to the Lord as an oblation. The object of devotion is the personal God, the *Puruṣothama* on whose mercy the devotee has to throw himself utterly. Absolute dependence and utter faith are very necessary for *Bhakti*.

The love of God is the Supreme Love and every other form of it is an imperfect manifestation of this Supreme Love. According to the views of the *B.G*, out of the four kinds of devotees- the suffering (*ārta*), the seeker for truth (*jijñāsu*), the self interested (*arthārthī*) and the wise (*jñāni*) - the last one is the

best. He alone knows that the Lord pervades the entire universe (*Vāsudevaḥ sarvam*). He sees the Lord in everything and everything in the Lord.³⁶

The *B.G* describes the real self of the individual as non-different from *Puruṣottama*. It considers the *Jīva* or the empirical self as a part or form of *Puruṣottama* and also of his *para-prakṛti* or conscious power.³⁷ It is stated in the *B.G* that a devotee attains similarity with *Puruṣottama* while a *jñānin* attains *nirvāṇa* and merges into *Brahman*.³⁸ From the varied statements of the *B.G* we can deduce that the relation between the Absolute and the self is one of difference-cum-non-difference. The real position, however seems to be that the self is a form of *Puruṣottama* and shares both the aspects of the absolute essence and the divine or conscious power of *Puruṣottama*. As *Puruṣottama* can exist as the actionless, qualityless and differenceless Brahman or can remain in divine sport through his divine power, so also the self can. The *jñānins* or those who pursue the path of knowledge meditate upon the quality less and actionless *akṣara-Brahman*, merge in *Brahman* and becomes identical with it in liberation. A *Bhakta* or devotee of *Puruṣottama*, on the other hand, shares his divine sport and remains with him through the relation of difference cum-non-difference. Of course, a *jñānin* is also said to attain

Puruṣottama, in the sense that the *akṣara-Brahman* attained by the *jñānin* is but an aspect of *Puruṣottama*. Again, a *Bhakta* of *Puruṣottama* is also said to be capable of merging into *Brahman*, because of the fact that *Puruṣottama* is the foundation of *Brahman*.³⁹

Theistic and Atheistic Strands in Indian Thought: There is a general view point held by scholars that Indian philosophy is essentially spiritual in nature. Philosophy and religion are intimately connected with each other in India. Religion is regarded here not as a system of dogmas but rather as a living experience. It is presented as the practical realization of the spiritual truth. In Indian point of view Philosophy is the theory of the reality. It is insight into the nature of the reality, which leads to liberation. It is not merely an ideal theorizing about realities of life, but a spiritual quest for the ultimate truth. It is a way of life and an approach to spiritual realization.⁴⁰ Philosophy is called *Darśana* in India. *Darśana* means vision. Philosophy is the vision of the Reality as a whole. It is an insight into the nature of the whole reality. Indian philosophy is based on reflective thinking. At the same time this thinking is subordinate to the authority of the *Vedas*. Authority is not arbitrary. It is the

authority of intuition of seers of truths. It is in the light of this view that Reasoning is stated as subordinate to intuition. Indian philosophy thus is based on speculation guided by intuition with a view to attaining liberation.

The schools of Indian Philosophy are divided into two broad classes, namely, orthodox and heterodox. The orthodox systems recognize the authority of the *Vedas*. The heterodox systems do not recognize their authority. The former are called *āstika*. It is not because they believe in God but rather they accept the authority of the *Veda*. The latter are called *nāstika* not because they do not believe in God. The *Nyāya*, the *Vaiśeṣika*, the *Sāṅkhya*, the *Yoga*, the *Mīmāṃsā* and the *Vedānta* are the six orthodox systems. The *Vedānta* system comprises several schools which have arisen as a result of the different interpretations offered by exponents of the *Upaniṣadic* texts, the *Vedānta-sūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, the triple foundation of *Vedānta*. The principal ones among them are the *Advaita* of Śaṅkara, the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja, the *Dvaita* of Madhva. The *Cārvākas*, the *Buddha* and the *Jaina* schools are the heterodox systems. They do not accept the authority of the *Vedas*.

Among the three main heterodox schools, *Cārvākas*, *Bauddhas* and *Jainas*, the *Cārvākas* are Materialists. They believe in the reality of matter only. They do not recognize the reality of the soul and God. The *Bauddhas* are phenomenologists. They believe in the reality of phenomena, changes, or impermanence. They do not recognize the reality of permanence. There are different schools of *Bauddhas*. Among them the *Vaibhāṣikas* and the *Sautrāntikas* are realists. They believe in the reality of external objects. The former are advocates of direct realism. They hold that impermanent external objects are directly perceived. The latter are advocates of indirect realism or representationism. They hold that impermanent external objects are not directly perceived, but inferred from cognitions in the mind, which represent them. The *Yogācāras*, another school in *Buddhism* are generally subjective-idealists. They hold that there are no external objects. According to them, the external objects are nothing but cognitions of the percipient mind which is a stream of consciousness. The *Mādhyamikas*, yet another school in *Buddhism* hold that there are neither external objects nor internal cognitions. They are mere appearances. According to them, the reality is essence-less, predicate-less, indefinable and

incomprehensible. Some *Bauddhas* hold that the Absolute consciousness alone is real.

The *Jainas* are dualists. They believe in the reality of soul and non-soul. The non-soul includes matter. The *Jainas* are atheists. They do not believe in God as the creator of the world. The *Cārvākas*, the *Bauddhas*, and the *Jainas* are regarded as heterodox because they reject the authority of the *Vedas*.

The following section of the thesis gives a brief account of the theistic position of orthodox schools in Indian Philosophy other than *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*. When we deal with these schools we do not hold the view that these schools necessarily take up some theistic positions in their philosophical attempts. Rather it simply tries to extract the theistic nuances from their philosophical positions that are at least implicitly included in them.

1.2 *Sāṅkhya's* positions on God.

Kapila is the founder of *Sāṅkhya* system. The earliest available work in this system is *Sāṅkhyakārika*. It does not discuss the existence of God and hence it can be said that in its classical form the *Sāṅkhya* does not give support to theism. It does not admit any supreme, absolute spirit. In its doctrines of

avidya, *bandha* as well as *kaivalya* it exhibits great similarity with *Buddhism*.

Later *Sāṅkhya* thinkers such as Vācaspatin, Vijñānabhikṣu and Nāgeśa try to give theistic interpretations to its earlier doctrines. They explain the world- process only with the help of the concepts of *Puruṣa*, the principle of consciousness, and *Prakṛti*, the non- conscious material cause of the world.

Generally the thought of later *Sāṅkhya* thinkers can be summarized as follows: It is said that in the beginning the equilibrium of *Prakṛti* is disturbed by the contact of the *Puruṣa*. As a result of this contact the *Prakṛti* evolves into the manifold world. At the time of dissolution all the evolutes turn back to the state of *Prakṛti*. Though the non-conscious *Prakṛti* has an inherent teleology to serve the cause of the *Puruṣas*, all the activities of the former being meant for the enjoyment and liberation of the latter.⁴¹ It is because of this fact that the course of evolution and involution of the world goes on in the harmony with the merits and demerits of the *Puruṣas*.⁴² It is in this connection that the notion of *Īśvara* as the creator, sustainer and destroyer is explained by Vācaspati, Vijñānabhikṣu and Nāgeśa.

In their view the process of the world can be explained with the principle of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* only.⁴³

The explanation of the world process only with reference to *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* is subjected to serious criticisms. The immanent teleology of unconscious *Prakṛti* is the sum of the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy. It is very difficult to explain how the evolution of *Prakṛti* could be adapted to the needs of the *Puruṣas*. There are also difficulties in the explanations given about the harmonious act of the two distinct principles, since they were not at all related to each other. According to *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, *Prakṛti* without the *Puruṣa* cannot act, nor can the *Puruṣa* attain liberation without the help of *Prakṛti*. “This wonderful way in which they help each other shows that the opposites fall within a whole. The transparent duality rests upon some unity above itself.”⁴⁴

According to the above stated problems and the solutions given to them, some later thinkers in *Sāṅkhya* philosophy attribute the act of guiding the evolution of *Prakṛti* to *Īśvara*. Thus, VijñānaBhikṣu admits the reality of the Universal spirit as the ground of the activities of the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. He says that ‘He, the supreme, the collective *Puruṣa*, possesses the power

of knowing all and the power of doing all'.⁴⁵ This spirit or *Brahman* or *Īśvara* puts *Prakṛti* and the *Puruṣa* into action and controls the process of evolution and dissolution by his mere proximity. *Īśvara* or *Brahman* is the ultimate ground or cause behind *Prakṛti* and the *Puruṣa*, and the guide of the inner harmony and order between the two. Thus, Vijñāna Bhikṣu holds that, according to *Sāṅkhya*, the transcendental spirit or Brahman is the Absolute '*Brahman*'. In the view of Bhikṣu it means the Universal consciousness which is not touched by, impurities etc. and is not limited by any contrition.⁴⁶

According to Bhikṣu, the denial of *Īśvara* found in the *Sāṅkhya-sūtra* may be interpreted as the denial of the phenomenal or *vyāvahārika* *Īśvara* i.e., of *Īśvara* as ordinarily conceived. The transcendental or *pāramārthika* *Īśvara* not denied in it. He further says that the atheistic attitude of *Sāṅkhya* may also be explained as an *abhyupagamavāda*, i.e., a concession to popular views, or as a *prauḍhivāda*, i.e., an unnecessarily extravagant claim.⁴⁷ According to him, the implication of this atheistic tendency is that the earlier position of *Sāṅkhya* system does not stand in need of *Īśvara* for the explanation of the world,

and that even without accepting *Īśvara* one can attain liberation by the discriminative knowledge of the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*.

Some critics of Vijñānabhikṣu hold the opinion that these theistic interpretations of the *Sāṅkhya-sūtras* are not correct, and that the theistic ideas of the commentators themselves have been super-imposed on the *Sāṅkhya-sūtras* which are, actually, atheistic. Accordingly, Vijñānabhikṣu's theistic interpretation of *Sāṅkhya* seems to be reasonable from a historical point of view alone and the denial of *Īśvara* in the *Sāṅkhya* may very well be interpreted as one only from the logical point of view.

1.3 Theism in *Yoga*

Patañjali, the exponent of the *Yoga* system does not feel the necessity of accepting *Īśvara* for the explanation of any philosophical problem. He mentions about *Īśvara* only in relation to his theme of *Īśvara Praṇidhāna* or meditation on God. According to him, it is one of the means for the attainment of *samādhi*.⁴⁸ *Īśvara* as it is presented and accepted in *Yoga* is endowed with eternal and supreme knowledge. It projects righteousness, complete and perfect detachment and infinite and eternal power. He is pure, blissful, free, immutable and eternal.

He is transcendent, uncaused, indestructible, omniscient, omnipotent, self complete, self contented and independent.⁴⁹

The notion of *Īśvara* in *Yoga* is a special kind of *Puruṣa*. But yet, according to the *Yoga* system he is distinct from other *Puruṣas*. So far as he is ever free, He lies above the law of *karma* and, for that reason, he is untouched by the fruits of *karma*. Accordingly, he is free from the cycle of birth and death and also from the joys and sorrows emerging from it.⁵⁰ The *Yoga* philosophy accepts that other *puruṣas* in their real nature are also untouched by *karman*, but because of their false identification with *buddhi* and other evolutes of *Prakṛti*, they seem to be subjected to the Law of *karman*. *Īśvara* on the other hand, is never identified, even falsely, with the evolutes of *Prakṛti*. It is therefore never subjected to the Law of *karman*. *Īśvara* is distinct also from the selves absorbed in *Prakṛti* at the time of dissolution, because these selves are liable to be subjected to bondage and to the resulting afflictions in future creation. *Īśvara* is never subjected to bondage and to the consequent afflictions awaiting the self in the future.⁵¹

According to the *Yoga* Philosophy, *Īśvara* is the greatest to all and is, therefore it is one. He is infinite in nature. He is not

limited or conditioned by time and space. The pre-eminence of *Īśvara* lies in the fact that there is no other divinity greater than or equal to him. The acceptance of any other divinity greater than or equal to *Īśvara* will go against his sovereignty. The *Yoga* system argues that if there be two rival lords, they will be either equal or unequal in powers. If they be equal, they may go against each other and fail to realize the desired ends. If they be unequal, the superior one of them will have to be regarded as having the trace *Īśvara*, and not the inferior one.⁵²

It is, therefore, held by the *Yogists* that *Īśvara* excels all other beings in knowledge and power. He is neither equal to nor surpassed by any other beings. Thus, we can deduce from their arguments that the conception of *Īśvara* in *Yoga* is monotheistic in nature and according to which *Īśvara* is one and the lord of all.

Īśvara is infinite and all pervasive. He is immutable and eternal; he is devoid of all modifications and changes. All changes are ascribed only to *Prakṛti*. He is omnipotent i.e., endowed with infinite powers. His power and will are boundless and eternal, existing even in dissolution. It is by his will that the *Jīvas* attain good and bad results in consonance with their merits and demerits. *Īśvara* is omniscient. His knowledge is infinite,

supreme, perfect and eternal. It does not lease even in dissolution. *Īśvara* has the intuitive knowledge of all the selves along with their *adr̥ṣṭas* or moral deserts and also of the nature of *Prakṛti* and its evolutes.⁵³

Being endowed with the perfect knowledge, *Īśvara* reveals himself as the supreme teacher (*Paramaguru*). He conveys true knowledge to the sages. He reveals the *Vedas* at the dawn of creation and communicates the same to the devotees. *Īśvara's* connection with the scriptures is beginning-less. He reveals them in the beginning of every world-epoch and takes them back into his being at the event of dissolution.⁵⁴

The *Yogists* further hold the view that *Īśvara* manifests the relation between the words and their objects. *Īśvara* is, however, not the creator of the relation between the words and their objects. It is only a mere principle that resides in him that reveals the relation between the words and their objects.⁵⁵

Īśvara reveals himself in the world through *śuddha-sattva* or pure *sattva*-quality. The *sattva*-quality is called *śuddha* or pure, as it is free from imperfections caused by the contact of the qualities of *rajas* and *tamas*. *Īśvara* has a full control over his pure *satva*. He maintains an external and inexplicable relation

with it. It is because of his eternal relation with the *sattva* quality that *Īśvara* possesses supreme power, wisdom and goodness.⁵⁶

According to *Yoga* system, in the beginning of every new creation, *Īśvara* owns a body of pure or pre-eminent *sattva*, which is free from all the effects of *karman*. Through this body, *Īśvara* approaches the devotees and favors them with their desired objects. It is also through this body of pure *sattva* untainted by *rajas* and *tamas* that *Īśvara* creates the scriptures through which he conveys true knowledge and morality to the devotees. At the time of cosmic dissolution, *Īśvara* leaves this body and allows it to dissolve into *Prakṛti*. While abandoning his body at the time of dissolution, he desires that it should spring forth again for his use at the beginning of the next creation. Accordingly, *Īśvara's* body of pure *sattva* comes forth from *Prakṛti* at the beginning of every creation, and dissolves into the same at the time of dissolution. This process goes on eternally. *Īśvara* adopts his body not for the fulfillment of any desire of his own. Since he is self-complete he has no desire to be fulfilled. He owns the body of pure *sattva* untainted by *rajas* and *tamas* simply in order to favor the devotees and impart true knowledge to them.⁵⁷

1.4 Atheism in *Mīmāṃsā*

Jaimini was the founder of *Mīmāṃsā* system. He does not refer God. Prabhākara and Kumārila do not accept the existence of God as the creator or the destroyer of the world. They also deny that God assigns the fruits of actions for man. But the *Mīmāṃsā* system believes in the law of *karma*. They hold the view that law of *karma* regulates the production of effect out of their causes in accordance with the moral desires of the individual soul. In its attitude towards the world *Mīmāṃsā* system is empirical and naturalistic.

The *Mīmāṃsakas* recognize two kinds of duties: secular and scriptural. The secular duties fulfill the perceptible secular ends. The scriptural duties fulfill imperceptible super-sensuous ends. The scriptural duties are of two kinds viz., conditional duties and unconditional duties. The former are empirical duties for the realization of desired ends. The latter are obligatory daily duties. The performance of conditional duties leads one to happiness. The performance of *Jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice leads to happiness in heaven. This happiness is supreme bliss unaffected with unhappiness. The non-performance of unconditional duties gives rise to sin. It demands the consequent punishment. But the

performance of them does not give rise to merit. They do not lead to happiness. Nor does it give rise to demerit, and lead to pain and suffering. It purifies the mind and gives rise to the knowledge of the self. It wipes off past sins and prevents sins which would emerge from the omission of unconditional duties. The conditional duties are obligatory independently of any desire. They are unconditionally obligatory. The scriptural duties are positive or negative. They are either positive actions or more prohibitions. The former enjoin the performance of right actions. The latter prohibit the commission of wrong actions.⁵⁸

The acts instructed by the *Vedas* lead to the attainment of their ends or fruits. The enjoined act is performed at one time and the fruition of the act follows much later. *Apūrvā*, the unseen agency generated by the performance of duties is the link that connects the act with its fruition. *Apūrvā* produces the fruition of the act at a later time. According to the view of the *Mīmāṃsakas*, the deferred fruition of prescribed duties is due to the mediation of *Apūrvā*.

Kumārila and Prābhākara hold different views regarding the nature of *Apūrvā*. Kumārila holds that the *Apūrvā* is a capability in the action. According to him, it is the agent, which

did not exist prior to the performance of the action. Its existence is proved by the authority of the *Vedas*. Before the prescribed scarifies are performed, there is an incapability in them leading to heaven, and there is an incapability in the self for attaining heaven. Both these incapacibilities are removed by the performance of the sacrifices, which creates a positive force or capacity, by virtue of which heaven is attained. This unseen force is called *Apūrva*, which is known by presumption. There is an apparent inconsistency between the performance of the prescribed act and its guaranteed fruition.⁵⁹ The hypothesis of *Apūrva* removes this apparent inconsistency between the performance of the prescribed sacrifice at one time and the attainment of heaven at a later time.

Prabhākara rejects Kumarila's view about *Apūrva*. According to him, a prescribed act is momentary. It cannot bring about its final result, the attainment of heaven, at a subsequent time. In order to answer about the question of the apparent inconsistency between the performance of the prescribed sacrifice at one time and the attainment of heaven at a later time Prabhākara formulates the following hypothesis about the *Apūrva*.

According to him, the *Apūrva* is ought or Duty, which is different from the act and it is revealed by the *Vedic* injunctions. This ‘ought’ is the end of volition. Volition is the effort or exertion of self. The conscious self knows the ‘ought’ through moral obligation and accomplishes it by its own effort or volition.⁶⁰ The *Apūrva* or ought is to be accomplished by the self’s volition, which is subordinate to it. The volition is the process of causation, since it is the exertion of the self by which it can accomplish the ‘ought’. All volitions of the self must be directed towards an Ideal or ‘ought’ which is accomplished by them. They are determined by the ‘ought’, without which they cannot exist. If the ought or the moral imperative or *Niyoga* is not the object of volition, there can be no knowledge of the Imperative.⁶¹ The *Niyoga* prompts the agent and induces him to put forth volition and exertion to accomplish the act. But it is difficult to explain how the *Niyoga* or the *Apūrva* can lead the self to attain the final result of the prescribed act done by it without producing a potency or disposition in the permanent self. Prabhākara holds the view that that the *Niyoga* produces an effect in the self in the form of a disposition which inheres in it, and cannot be known by any other means of knowledge except

by moral obligation. The act or its potency is not permanent. But the disposition of the self is permanent. It can bring about the accomplishment of the final result.⁶²

1.5 God in *Advaita Vedānta*

According to Śaṅkara, *Brahman* is the only, the supreme and the most perfect reality. It is devoid of any quality and action. It is a self-contained reality without any difference either internal or external. The world of manifoldness exists only from the phenomenal point of view, while from the transcendental point of view, it is without any existence. Further, though the real self or *ātman* is identical with *Brahman*, the empirical selves are mere appearances.

It is *māyā*, the cosmic nescience, which is responsible for the appearances of the manifold material world and the empirical selves. Thus, in the view of Śaṅkara, the quality-less, action-less and difference-less *Brahman* is the only reality. Accordingly, this system is called *Advaitavāda* or non-dualism.⁶³

In the view of *Advaitavāda*, the *Brahman*, the Absolute, is opposed to all empirical entities. It is non-spatial and non-temporal. It is not conditioned by space or time. As it has no spatial relation to anything else, it is devoid of causality, which

implies time-relation. It is quite different from anything and everything of the world, and, as such, it cannot be described adequately through language we use to describe empirical categories. Neither can it be understood by the mind, because it is not possible for the finite mind to conceive the infinite. *Brahman* is therefore, indeterminate. It cannot be described by positive qualifications. The best way to describe *Brahman* is to negate all worldly conceptions of it. Thus, it is *nirguṇa* or devoid of quality. *Guṇas* are products of *Prakṛti*, while the Absolute transcends *Prakṛti* and the *guṇas*. To attribute any quality to *Brahman* is to limit it, while *Brahman* is beyond all limitations.⁶⁴ It transcends the concepts of being and non-being, permanence and change, whole and part, relative and absolute, limit and infinite—all of which are based on our ordinary experience, and are used to describe categories of the empirical world. Śaṅkara goes so far to describe it not as ‘one’ but as ‘non-dual’ or ‘*advaita*’.⁶⁵

Śaṅkara distinguishes two stages of *Brahman*, namely, the Higher or *Para Brahman* and the Lower or *Apara Brahman*. The *nirguṇa Brahman* or *Brahman* devoid of qualities and actions and lying beyond the world-process, is the *Para Brahman*. The

saguṇa Brahman or *Brahman* endowed with qualities and actions and concerned with the world-process is the *Apara Brahman*. It is this *Apara Brahman* is otherwise called *Īśvara*.

According to *Advaitavāda*, *Īśvara* or God is not the highest reality. He is lower manifestation of *Brahman*, the Absolute devoid of qualities, forms and actions. It is *Brahman* endowed with the power of *māyā* that manifest itself as *Īśvara*, the Lord of the universe. In other words, *Brahman* lying beyond the world-process is the Absolute. When it descends a little and becomes the governor of the world-process, it reveals itself as *Īśvara*. It is further held that *Īśvara* is an object of invocation and worship. *Īśvara* is, in reality, without any body, but out of love for the bound selves, he assumes a divine body through which he helps the individual selves in their spiritual pursuits.⁶⁶

It is held by the *Advaita Vedāntins* that the *saguṇa Brahman* or *Īśvara* is postulated for those who are in a lower spiritual level, and, hence, are not capable of meditating upon the *nirguṇa Brahman*. The two phases of *Brahman-nirguṇa* and *saguṇas*-accepted by the *Advaitins*, are, however, not different from each other. The same *Brahman* viewed from the Absolute standpoint is called the *nirguṇa Brahman* and looked from the

empirical standpoint is regarded as the *saguṇa Brahman* or *Īśvara*.⁶⁷

According to *Advaita Vedāntins*, from the *pāramārthika* or transcendental point of view, *Īśvara* is also merely an appearance. The world with all its varieties being devoid of any transcendental reality, *Īśvara*, its creator, also must be regarded as unreal. He is real only from the *vyāvaharika* or phenomenal point of view. It is, however, held that *Brahman*, the Absolute, can be attained through *Īśvara*, since he is the highest revelation of the Absolute.

The afore stated hasty survey of the theistic position in the Indian Philosophical tradition conveys the point that there is a long history of thinking in India that witnesses the major turning points in its theistic traditions. In the following chapters of this thesis an attempt is made to look in detail how theistic positions emerged and developed in some of the prevalent Indian Philosophical traditions like *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* systems of thought. A comparative analysis of their view points helps us to know the multiple strands of thought adopted by these systems to develop the theistic positions in Indian Philosophy.

NOTES

- 1 The view that is now replacing it is one of set forth by Dr.Winternitz in his History of Indian Literature, which fixes the beginning of the period somewhere between 2000 and 2500 BC instead of 1200-1500 BC. It is not known what changes, if any, will be found necessary in this conclusion when in the momentous discoveries made in recent years in the Indus Valley near Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa are fully understood.
- 2 R.V., I.64.46.
- 3 Ibid., VI, 48.14
तं व इन्द्रं न सुक्रतुं वरुणमिव मायिनम् ।
अर्यमणं न मन्द्रं सुप्रभोजसं विष्णुं न स्तुष आदिशे ॥
- 4 Ibid., VII.28.4
एभिर्न इन्द्राभिर्दशस्य दुर्मित्रासौ हि क्षितयः पवन्ते ।
प्रति यच्चष्टे अनृतमनेन अव द्विता वरुणो मायी न रक्षात् ॥
- 5 Six systems of Indian philosophy by F.Max Muller collected works, Vol.XIX, S.S.p.40.
- 6 S.Br. , V.1.2.10 and 13.
- 7 R.V., X.121.
- 8 R.V., X.129
- 9 Ibid., X.90
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा अत्यतिष्ठात् दशाङ्गुलम् ।
- 10 Tai.Up., II.2.2
सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म ।
- 11 Br.Up., IV.5.13
स यथा सैन्धवघनाऽनन्तरोऽबाह्यः कृत्स्नो रसघन एव, एवं वा
अरेऽयमात्मानन्तरोऽबाह्यः... ब्रवीमीति होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यः ।
- 12 Ibid.II.3.6
नेति नेति, न ह्येतस्मादिति नेत्यन्यत्परमास्तितेषामेव सत्यम् ।
- 13 Tai.Up., II.7
असद्वा इदमग्रमासीत् ततो वै सदजायता तदात्मानं
स्वयमकुरुतः तत्प्रातत्सुकृतं उच्यते इति ।
- 14 Ibid., II.4
यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ... ।
- 15 Kath.Up., I.2.20
अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्यजन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम्
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको, धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ।
- 16 Īśa.Up.,
अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत् ।
तद्भावतोऽन्यानत्येतितिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातारिश्वाधधाति ।
- 17 Śv.Up., III.2
द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोः अन्यः पिप्पलं स्वादु अत्ति अनश्नन् अन्यः अभिचाकशीति ।
- 18 Ibid., IV.6
छा सुपर्णा सयुजा सरवाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाने ।
तयोः अन्यः पिप्पलं स्वादु अत्ति अनश्नन् अन्यः अभिचाकशीति ॥

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- 19 VK., I.4.22
- 20 Muṇ.Up., II.1.1
तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकद्विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।
यथाऽक्षराद्विविधा सोम्य भावः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति ।
- 21 Ibid., 1.1.7
यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति ।
यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाऽक्षरात्सम्भवतीह विश्वम् ।
- 22 Ch.Up., 3.14.1
सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शान्तं उपासीत ।
अथ खलु क्रतुमयः पुरुषः...स क्रतुं कुर्वीत ।
- 23 Īśa.Up., I
ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्या जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥
- 24 It has to be noted that even these Gods appear later as the personification of ātman or Brahman, in accordance with the general spirit of Upaniṣadic teaching.
- 25 The MBH.Sp., for instance, says that Śiva sprang from śrī Kṛṣṇa's forehead thus repudiating the supremacy assigned to him in Śaivism
- 26 B.G., VI.7.8
जितात्मनः श्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्ण - सुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥
ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितोन्द्रियः ।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥
- 27 Ibid., X.10
तोषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥
- 28 Ibid., II.59
विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥
- 29 Ibid., IV.38
न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशां पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धं कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥
- 30 Ibid., VII.18
उदाशः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ।
- 31 Ibid., XVIII.11
न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशोषनः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥
- 32 Ibid., III.16
एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥
- 33 Ibid., II.47.
कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

- 34 Ibid., V.4
साङ्ख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यग्भयोर्विन्दते फलम् ।
- 35 Ibid., XII.10
अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थाऽसि मत्कर्म परमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिमवाप्स्यासि ॥
- 36 Ibid., VII.16, 17, 19
चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मा जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासु र्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥
तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥
बहूनां जन्मना मन्ते ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ।
- 37 Ibid., 13.2
क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥
- 38 Ibid., 14.2
इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागतः ।
सर्गोऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥
- 39 S.Radhakrishnan- I.P.vol.I, P.548
- 40 Ibid. P.26.
- 41 SSB.3.57
तदा चासमाप्तार्थपुरुषसन्निध्यात् तदर्थमन्येच्छाऽनधीनाया
अपि प्रकृतेः प्रवृत्तिरावश्यकीति ।
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 S.Radhakrishnan- I.P.Vol.II; P.230
- 45 SSB., 3.57
तदा चासमाप्तार्थपुरुषसन्निध्यात्
तदर्थमन्येच्छाऽनधीनाया अपि प्रकृतेः प्रवृत्तिरावश्यकीति ।
- 46 Ibid., 5.116.
छयोः समाधिसुषुप्तयोः सबीजं बन्धबीजसहितं
ब्रह्मत्वमन्यत्र बन्ध इत्यसकृदावेदितम् ॥
- 47 Ibid., Introduction.
- 48 YS., I.23
ईश्वरप्रणीधानाद्वा ।
- 49 YSBh., 1.29
तस्माज्जपात्तदर्थभावनाञ्च योगिनः
प्रत्यक्चेतनाधिगमो भवतिशक्तिप्रतिबन्धोऽपि भवति ॥
- 50 Ibid., 1.24
तदाचेश्वरचित्तसत्त्वं प्रणीधानवासनावशात्तथवेश्वरचित्तसत्त्वावेन परिणमते ...
प्रकृतिपुरुषव्यतिरेकेणार्थान्तराभावात् ॥
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Das gupta. H., I.P., Vol.I pp.159-160
- 53 YSBh., 1.24-25

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- 54 Ibid., I.26.
यथास्य सर्गस्यादौ प्रकर्षगत्या सिद्धस्तथातिक्रान्तसर्गादिष्वपि प्रत्येतव्यः ।।
- 55 Ibid., I.27
वाच्यः ईश्वरः प्रणवस्य किमस्य संकेतकृतं ... ।
- 56 Ibid., I.25
यत्र काष्ठाप्राप्तिर्ज्ञानस्य स सर्वज्ञः ।
- 57 Ibid.,
तत्फलं विपाकः तदनुगुणा वासना आशयाः .. न विशेषप्रतिपत्तौ समर्थमिति ।
- 58 PSPM., P166
- 59 Ibid., P.166
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 PSPM., P.187
- 63 Ch.Up., 6.2
सत्त्वेव सोम्य ! इदमग्र आसीद् एकमेवाद्वितीयम्।
- 64 A.S., P.717
- 65 S.Radhakrishnan- I.P.Vol-II, P.P.535-6
- 66 A.S., pp.740-1
- 67 Ibid., p.721

CHAPTER II

THEISM IN NYĀYA VAIŚEṢIKA

In the history of the course of thinking, both Indian and Western, one problem persists repeatedly. This is the question about the ultimate reality or God. The views of those who study the problem of God simultaneously had been influenced very much by them in their positions on other important problems as well with which they engage in their thinking. Thus, for instance, if a system accepts the existence of God, its theory of knowledge will be different from the theory of knowledge of a system which does not accept the existence of God. Similar is the case with its metaphysics and obviously with regard to its ethics. These can be easily demonstrated with examples from the history of the systems of thought.

One of the most interesting phases in the development of Indian philosophical thought is the comprehensive and constant polemics between the *Buddhists* and *Naiyāyikas*. The debate ranged over a vast variety of topics such as the nature of reality, means of valid knowledge and so on. The conflict, however, was most powerful regarding the nature of inference. In this situation of disagreement between them about this *pramāṇa*, the arguments proposed to establish the existence of God attained great importance.

2.1 Development of theism in *Vaiśeṣika*

Those who make a hasty survey through the *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* can easily note that it renders at length the important thoughts for the soul theory in matured *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*¹. But nowhere in it is the notion of the highest soul mentioned. In the same way in it nowhere the concept of *Īśvara* is given and named. We can see that no passage in the *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* directly refers to Him². Later commentators, as for example Śaṅkara Miśra in his *Upaskāra* (17th Century), see a reference to *Īśvara* in the third *sūtra* of the first *book tad-vacanād-āmnāyasya-prāmāṇyam*³. But it is generally accepted that the word *tad* of the *sūtra* refers to *dharma* which has been defined in the previous *sūtra*, and the text should be translated: ‘The authoritativeness of scripture is due to its being, an exposition of *dharma*’. Kaṇāda opens his *sūtra* with the assurance of the explanation of *dharma*⁴. He defines *dharma* as that by the possession of which *Nihśreyasa* is attained⁵. Kaṇāda accepts the authority of the *Vedas*. Even though he does not teach that God has revealed *Vedas*, it does not mean that he refute this fact. As far as the knowledge required composing the *Vedas* in concerned Kaṇāda says human beings do not have such knowledge. So someone superior to men must be the author of the

*Veda*⁶. Kaṇāda in the aphorism *tad-vacanād-āmnāyasya-prāmāṇyam* makes it clear that the authority comes to Veda because it is told by Him. Here the 'tat' means the teller of *dharma*, Kaṇāda has said this *sūtra* and the interpreters like Praśastapāda and Vyomaśiva have treated the '*tadvacana*' as the sayings of God. And they introduced God in this system by name. They state that creation and destruction are due to the desire of God.

With reference to the knowledge required to compose the *Vedas*, Kaṇāda comments that there must be certain beings, superior to men, who alone can claim to be the authors of the great renderings in the *Vedas*. He argues that unless such beings exist no one can perceive the invisible substances, like air⁷. All the commentaries on the *sūtra* of Kaṇāda and almost all the later works of *Vaiśeṣika*, give special attention to this topic. It is to be noted that in the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra* of Kaṇāda, there is no open reference to God. But still it is generally held that the *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy is one of the orthodox systems that accept the validity of the *Vedās* and which allows place for God. It is true that there is no reference to god as a cosmic soul in the *Vaiśeṣika sūtra*. But Kaṇāda does not deny the existence of God. All the commentators

of *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* have not introduced God, in a way to make it a theistic philosophy. But it is to be remembered that the mere absence of an open reference to God does not prove the non-existence of Him. In the *Praśastapādabhāṣya*, there is a full chapter which explains how God creates and destroys the universe. *Vyōmaśiva* also have proved the existence of God with elaborated arguments.

As it is well known *Vaiśeṣika Sutra* is the only work attributed to Kaṇāda. An in-depth study of the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* makes it clear that Kaṇāda must have recognized God. Kaṇāda is positive in admitting the super-sensuous perception of mystics and seers and recognizes such a perception as a valid means of knowledge. This logically proves that Kaṇāda is not negative in recognizing God. The perception of seers is said to be due to their power of *Mantras* by which they praise different *Devatās*. We can see that Kaṇāda recognizes super natural souls as *Devatās*. Such recognition might have presupposed the existence of a super natural agency, which is nothing but God. Besides these indications given in *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* to support the existence of God, we see that in the second discussion of the sixth chapter Kaṇāda deals with duties of man regulated in the *Vedās*. In accordance with the instructions given in *Vedās* the performance

of religious rites prepares one to gain access into *Svarga*. By this it is clear that Kaṇāda has accepted *Svarga* and such imperceptible and divine worlds which are recognized as the abodes of God.

In the history of the interpretations on *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* we can see attempts to unearth the proof for the existence of God in connection with the theory of ātoms as well. Theory of ātoms is one of the most important theories advocated by the *Vaiśeṣika*. It is the fundamental principle of *Vaiśeṣika* system. This theory states that the world is produced out of *ātoms*. It is said that the ātoms are developing themselves in a variety of forms. It would be the position like that of the materialists. They hold that the world itself is the outcome of the *ātoms* and that there is no God. But with no doubt we can say that *Vaiśeṣikas* accepts the existence of God who has put the *ātoms* in a peculiar shape. This shows that God has some will and design. God designs order out of the chaos of the *ātoms*. It is His function. Kaṇāda might have deliberately excluded God from the system, not as being non-existent, but as being beyond and above the phenomenal world with which the system chiefly deals. It is true that Kaṇāda does not mention God in his *sūtras*. He traces the primal activities of *ātoms* and Soul to the principle of *adr̥ṣṭa*. An atom is having no parts and it is independent. They opine that ātoms are perceived

by God. But barring the reference to God and individual soul there is nothing in the system so elaborate in its contents to make an *ātom* spiritual. It always remains independent. In the midst of the *ātoms* of other substance, the *ātoms* maintain their particularity. To produce things of larger magnitude, an *ātom* is empowered to combine itself with other *ātoms*. It shares the quality of eternity with God. The *ātoms* are motionless and inactive. The interpreters of *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* hold that it is God who puts *ātoms* in motion so as to effect successive combinations to form various things. The *ātoms* maintain their original stage and continue to exist during the destruction of the universe.

Another important contribution of *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* to the systems of thought is the theory of categories⁸. With reference to this theory also we can speak about the theistic nature of *Vaiśeṣika* system. Kaṇāda accepts six categories. Kaṇāda mentions about *abhāva* but did not give it the status of category. Later *Vaiśeṣikas* accepts non-existence as a category. They divide all existent categories under two titles: *Bhāva* and *Abhāva*. In the six categories, substance comes first. It is of nine kinds: earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, spirit, and mind. Mind is the internal organ. Spirit or *ātman* is the eighth category. They accept plurality of soul. Each soul is independent, individual, eternal and all

pervading spiritual substance. Consciousness is not an inseparable quality of the self or not the essence of the self. Consciousness is considered as an adventitious attribute of the self, because the self does not possess this quality during deep sleep. Since consciousness is a quality, it must reside somewhere. But it is not the quality of the body or the sense or the mind. At the most one can state that it resides in the self. Besides consciousness, the soul possesses some other important qualities viz., desire (*iccha*) volition (*yatna*)⁹ etc. also.

The importance of the elaboration of the six categories is that the right knowledge of the similarities and dissimilarities of the six categories are helpful to liberation¹⁰. According to *Vaiśeṣika*, bondage is due to ignorance and liberation is due to right knowledge. Here the knowledge means the right knowledge of the similarity and dissimilarity of the six categories. Due to ignorance the individual souls perform actions. Actions are the cause of merit and demerit. The actions are in the things which are supposed to be the giver of pleasure or the avoider of sorrow. Actually the wrong knowledge finds its place here. Men know a thing as the giver of pleasure which is actually not.

Supreme good results from particular *dharma* (merit). This *dharma* is assisted by the desire of the Supreme God. He is guided

by the law of *karma* representing the merits and demerits. The merit and demerit of the individual souls are called *Adr̥ṣṭa*. *Adr̥ṣṭa* is imparted in accordance to the good and bad deeds (*karma*) of the individual souls. This *Adr̥ṣṭa* is guided by God because *Adr̥ṣṭa* is unintelligent to supervise and control *dharma*. It conveys motion in the ātoms. This motion in the ātoms leads to the creation. Creation is for the sake of enjoyment or suffering of the individual souls. As long as this creation continues, the soul will be bound and with the stoppage of creation the soul is liberated. The liberation is due to the knowledge about the categories. The liberated souls have the knowledge of nothing, no feeling, no action. The soul is absolutely free at the stage of liberation¹¹.

In connection with the afore-mentioned details regarding the six categories, God is considered as the efficient cause of the world. The ātoms are the material cause of it. God cannot directly operate or create the world. He only gives motion to the ātoms.

Praśastapāda : The great commentator of the *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* also holds essentially the same doctrine as that of *sūtras* as regards the authority of the *Vedas* and about the soul theory¹². He does not mention about *Īśvara* in connection with the authority of the *Vedas*. He argues that the authority of the scriptures depends upon

the authority of the speaker¹³. We can easily note that Praśastapāda does not identify the authors of the *Vedas* with *Īśvara*. He speaks of the authors of *Vedas* as endowed with superior knowledge to their merit¹⁴. At the same time we see that Praśastapāda opens his commentary by paying homage to *Īśvara*. There he describes *Īśvara* as the cause (of the world). He then goes on to say that the knowledge of the six categories is the cause of liberation. This knowledge itself, however originates from dharma, which is prescribed by *Īśvara*¹⁵. In the last *śloka* of the book he mentions about Maheśvara, by whom Kaṇāda is said to have been pleased. Besides these secondary references, Praśastapāda teaches that the periodic process of creation and dissolution is caused by the desire of *Īśvara*. In this description of creation, he speaks about the origin of the great Egg (*mahadaṇḍam*) from the mere thought of the Supreme Lord¹⁶. Besides to the explanation of the creation, when treating of the quality aspects of created, Praśastapāda elucidates that largeness and length are produced in the molecules by plurality just as minuteness (*aṇutva*) and shortness in the binary ātoms is produced by duality. But these duality and plurality depend for their existence on the knowledge of *Īśvara*¹⁷.

The aforementioned cosmological functions of God's intellect as they are described by Praśastapāda will be developed later by Udayana, one of the greatest commentators of *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* into an argument to prove the existence of God. Udayana's views on theism will later be discussed further in this study. We have already seen that Praśastapāda mentions about the role of God in order to explain how *ātoms* without extension are able to produce molecules with extension. The author of the *Bhāṣya*, Vātsyāyana accepts therefore the existence of God without attempting to prove it. Hence Theism is generally not considered as an integral part of his philosophical system.

Vyomaśivācārya : Now we shall see how Vyomaśivācārya, the greatest commentator of the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* in the 10th century in his *Vyomavati* takes up the general argument for the existence of God based on the cosmic process of creation and annihilation of the universe. He says that creation and annihilation of the universe are performed by an intelligent agent. According to him, this agent is God. In order to hold this view Vyomaśivācārya first proves the fact that the universe is created. The argument is that 'the universe is created and destroyed because it has a physical structure'. Whatever has a physical structure is a product. All the products

are created and are bound to be destroyed. So the universe is created and destroyed as it is also a product having physical structure. It means that all things having a structure are products. The consequence of this position is that wherever a physical structure is found there is impermanence. The universe has got a physical structure and so it is a product. So the universe is created and as a product it is destroyed also. The universe having produced and destroyed must have a producer and destroyer. This producer and destroyer must be an intelligent and conscious being. Here he poses a syllogism i.e., the earth and the like have an intelligent cause, because they are products. Therefore the universe as a whole has got such a cause.

In this syllogism Vyomaśivācārya cites the example of a pot and its creator a potter, an empirical soul with limited knowledge and power. But one may doubt that, how can this example prove the existence of a cosmic soul with unlimited powers. The answer to this objection is that, what is inferred in the given syllogism is only the agency of a sentient Being without reference to its powers. In the case of the creation of earth, a being which is capable of creating the earth only is proved. So the above example proves that a pot points to a sentient being capable of producing it. In the like manner the earth and the like presuppose only such a

being as is capable of producing them. Such a being should have the knowledge of all the causes including the ātoms which are the material causes of the products in the universe. So the conscious being that has knowledge of ātoms and such supersensible beings must be omniscient Being. Here another objection can be posed that the Being that is established by the above argument is only a sentient Being- producing an effect and not an omniscient being. According to this objection, in the argument the general concept is based on general concomitance.

Against this objection Vyomaśiva argues that laws about the particulars are shaped out of general laws. A common rule applies to all the particulars in question. So in the argument for the existence of God, the particular producer i.e., the omniscient Being is proved by the general law that the product points to a sentient being. There is again an objection that the inference in the case of, for example fire from smoke is not similar to the inference of the Supreme-Soul, because fire is perceptible and the Supreme-soul is beyond perception. As an answer to this objection Vyomaśiva says that in establishing the existence of God, the concomitance of a being is universally established but the powers of these beings may be verified later. In the instance of the inference of fire from smoke supports the inductive logic i.e.,

proven fact emerges from the particular to general; where as in the case of the Supreme Soul it is from the general to the particular. There the proven fact is deduced from the general.

According to Vyomaśiva, the non perceptibility of the Supreme Soul does not make his argument weak, because there are many valid types of inference which establish the existence of the imperceptible objects. It is ridiculous to say that the potter must be fully similar to the cosmic creator. In the argument for the existence of God, God is inferred as an agent at least and not as God. In his opinion there is nothing inconsistent in saying that God is endowed with the complete knowledge of the instruments and aware about the process of the creation of cosmos because every producer should necessary have knowledge of the components of the product. According to this view the cosmic creator should be omniscient.

According to Vyomaśiva God is not embodied. Those who conceive God to be embodied think so because they argue that all the sentient creators are always found to have body and God as a sentient creator also should have a body. But *Naiyāyikas* cannot accept this view. In their view if God is having a body, his knowledge and power should be limited as in the case of all other sentient creators and such a person having limited knowledge and

power cannot create this universe. Moreover there is no evidence of having a body for God. God is merely an agent. He cannot be said to have a body. If He is having a body then He cannot be the cosmic creator. With a body similar to that of an empirical creator, God cannot be accepted to be the creator of the universe. And there is vast difference between God, the cosmic agent and the ordinary soul, the empirical agent. Both the ordinary soul and the cosmic soul are similar as agents, but the enormity of power and function of the cosmic agent makes Him the highest while that of the empirical agent the lowest. Hence it cannot be said that God should have a body just as the empirical soul has. If God is having a body He will be having limited knowledge and power so His field of activity also would be limited. If this is the case then the simultaneous effects in the vast area of space cannot be accounted for.

If God is having a body, it is clear that it is His own creation. Then the question arises whether He created that Body with or without a body. If he created it with a body, then that body must be non-eternal and must have been created by Him with another body which again must have been created by Him with yet another body ad infinitum. Thus the Supreme Being should be always busy with the creation of the series of His own

bodies and no other work is possible for him. If it is accepted that God creates His first body without being a body, then He can create this universe also without a body. So there would be no necessity to God for a body at all. According to Vyomaśiva, accepting an embodied God is logically defective and self-destructive. Recognition of God means recognition of a supreme agent with multiple powers. These powers are not similar to that of the power of the empirical embodied agent. Thus the subject of inference shows that the existence of God is dissimilar to the empirical agent. If the subject is the body then it may be argued that the possession of body makes God similar to the empirical agent.

Since it cannot be proved that God has a body it is clear that it is not the body that makes one creator. If it is the body that makes one creator, then one would be a creator even in the state of sleep and absent-mindedness as the body exists even in such states. It is the power to make use of the material causes identifies a creator. It is the will of God that plays an important role in the cosmic acts of creation and dissolution of the universe. It means that God exercises His will to create and destroy.

The will of God is totally different from that of the will of an ordinary man. It is without selfish motives. God acts for others.

He has nothing to gain for himself through His creation. He creates only for the sake of empirical souls. The will of God is eternal and it acts when the auxiliary factor, i.e., *adr̥ṣṭa* appears. It is the cause of beginning-less creation. This unbroken continuity is a fact.

From the afore-mentioned descriptions we can state that Vyōmaśiva has discussed and established the existence of God. The explanations about the will of God prove that God is not embodied. From this we can see that the early *Vaiśeṣikas* have the theistic tendency. It is clear that the *Vaiśeṣikas* system right from the early stages is theistic in nature.

2.2 Development of theism in *Nyāya*

Goutama, the expounder of *Nyāya* system devotes three short *sūtras*¹⁸ to the view that God is the cause of the world. These *sūtras* can be deemed as the starting point of the theism of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* systems. All subsequent authors of these systems are undeniably theists. The theism of Goutama himself, however, is not obvious in his *sūtras*. We shall examine the context and the meaning and the theistic *sūtras* of Goutama in the following section in connection with whatever may have been the original views of *Nyāya*. It is obvious to anyone who is familiar with the

Nyāya-sūtra that the doctrine of *karma* as exposed in it leaves little room for *Īśvara* and all subsequent *Naiyāyikas* will be faced with the problems of the position of a supreme Lord in the system and about the mechanical and inevitable law of retribution. There are indications which will prove that originally theism was not treated as an essential part of *Nyāya-sūtra* but might have been added later after *Nyāya* had been developed into a system.

In a systematic exposition of the soul-theory neither Gautama nor his first commentators (Vātsyāyana, Udyotakara, Vācaspati) distinguish between the individual and the Supreme Soul.¹⁹ If theism had originally belonged to the system we would naturally find references to God here, as we find them in later works of *Nyāya*. Udayana for example, in his short treatise *Lakṣaṇāvali* and *Bhāsarvajña*, the first syncretic author of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, in his *Nyāya-sāra* mention *Īśvara* when composing the soul-theory²⁰.

Vātsyāyana uses the word *pratyātma* (individual soul) in his commentary on *Nyāya-sūtra*. There he describes God as a special soul and thus incorporates theism into the system, but it must be remembered that he does this mentioning about God only when commenting on the three theistic *sūtras* and not when exposing his soul-theory. Besides, the idea seems to be new to him if we

evaluate it from the way he stresses the fact that God cannot be conceived otherwise. According to him, God is a distinct soul endowed with certain qualities as a being of the same kind as that of soul. Vātsyāyana cannot put God under any other category than the category of soul, but a soul with special qualities.

Nyāya recognizes the *Vedas* and deduces their authority from the trustworthiness of the dependable exposition. The *sūtras* already bring forward this argument without specifying who is meant by the ‘reliable expositor’. ‘The trustworthiness of the word of the *Veda* is based upon the trustworthiness of the reliable expositor, just as the trustworthiness of the chants of medical scriptures’,²¹.

Vātsyāyana gives a rather lengthy commentary on the *sūtra* about the trustworthiness of the summons of the *Vedas*. It may be summarized as follows: The trustworthiness of incantations of medical scriptures can be established by the fact that they produce the desired results. This reliability is due to the trustworthiness of the reliable expositor that must have as his qualifications: superior knowledge, compassion, and the desire to describe things as they are. From the credibility of one part of the *Vedas* that deal with the medical scriptures it can be deduced that those portions deal

with the invisible things are also trustworthy in its nature. The *Nyāya-bhāṣya* uses the plural in drawing the conclusion: The seers and speakers are the same reliable persons in the case of the *Vedic* texts and that of the medical scriptures. Hence from the trustworthiness of the latter we can infer that of the former also. Finally dealing with an objection from *Mīmāṃsaka*, Vātsyāyana says that all that can be meant by eternal *Vedas* is ‘continuity of tradition’ and activity according to them throughout the ages. It can be noted that throughout this long discussion the notion of *Īśvara* is not mentioned by him. If theism had been an original tenet of *Nyāya*, the authority of scripture would no doubt have been referred to God²².

Udyotakara proves the authority of the *Vedas* by the fact that they have been asserted by a special self. It is clear from the context what is meant by this special self, since the Sanskrit word chosen by Udyotakara is adopted from the classical definition of God in the *Yoga-sūtra*.

Vācaspati is the first among the *Naiyāyikas* who openly tells us that the merciful maker of a universe has revealed the *Vedas* for the benefit of living beings, and that *Vedas* are therefore authoritative. But even he does not use the word *Īśvara* in his

exposition. Commenting on the sutras and earlier commentaries of it²³, Vācaspati lists four descriptions proper to the maker of the world. viz., (1) capable of making the body (2) Untouched by hindrance (3) *karma* fruition of *karma* impressions. (4) Most merciful. The third epithet is the definition of God given in the *sūtras*. It is advised that the instruction of the one who is the father for His creatures is to be accepted reverently by all. Scripture made by Him is authoritative. It has been revealed by a trustworthy person just as the incantations and the teachings of the medical *Veda*. From this it is evident that both Udyotakara and Vācaspati base their views on the authority of the *Veda*. In the situations where they differ from the *sūtras* and the *Bhāṣya*, they use the technical terms of yoga in order to substantiate their views.

The above explanations suggest very strongly that originally theism was not a tenet of Nyāya. Theism was borrowed from yoga and was accepted very early probably because the authors of *Nyāya* felt the need of giving their religious practices a theoretical expression.

As we have already seen that the *Vaiśeṣika* system was originally not theistic. It is also almost certain that theism was not an original tenet of *Nyāya*. This, however, does not necessarily mean that Goutama himself cannot have been a theist. At the

origin of all development of *Nyāya* thought on the existence of God are the three aphorisms in the *Nyāyasūtras*, the earliest extant work of the *Nyāya* school. These are:

“ईश्वरः कारणं पुरुषकर्मोफल्यदर्शनात्”²⁴: God is the cause because we find fruitlessness in the actions of men. “न, पुरुषकर्माभावे फलानिष्पत्तेः”²⁵: It is not so because no fruit appears without the actions of men; “तत्कारितत्वादहेतुः ।”²⁶ This reasoning is not correct since it (the action of man) is influenced by him (God).

These are the three theistic *sūtras* which had made such significant impact in the history of *Nyāya* theism. It is not easy, however, to establish their exact meaning. And, in fact varied interpretations are given for these *sūtras* both by ancient and modern *Naiyāyikas*. The early commentators Pakṣilasvāmin and Uddyotakara consider these *sūtras* as explicit reference to the *Nyāya* view about the existence of God as the cause of the world. Accordingly, they take *sūtra* 19 to mean the *Nyāya* doctrine that God causes the world. Against this position an objection is raised in *sūtra* 20, namely, no fruit occurs without the action of man. But this objection is invalidated since it is held that the action of man is caused by God.

Among the Sanskrit commentators of the *Nyāyasūtras*, Viśvanātha also follows the aforementioned interpretation. But Vācaspati Miśra and Udayana interpret these *sūtra*-s differently. Vācaspati takes *sūtra* 19 as expressing the *Vedānta* view that Brahman is the material cause of the world. In *sūtra*, this view is rejected on the ground that there is no fruit when there is no action of man. Besides this *Sūtra* 21 asserts the *Nyāya* view that God is the efficient cause of the world. This is also the interpretation of Udayana and of his commentator Vardhamāna. The following section of this thesis examines in detail the opinions of these commentators.

With fair certainty we can state that the meaning of the *sūtra*-s is practically the same as in the interpretation given by Vātsyāyana, in spite of some divergent opinions raised by some of the modern commentators of it²⁷. The reason for our position is that in the context in which these theistic *sūtra*-s stand naturally take such a meaning. And when we compare the doctrine contained in these *sūtra*-s with the theories accepted by Gautama in the other sections of the *Nyāyasūtra*-s, this interpretation is verily confirmed. The discussions on God and his existence occur in the fourth chapter of the *Nyāyasūtra*-s, where the question

about the origin of things is stated. Four opinions are mentioned here about the origin of the world. They are:

1. All manifest things originate from manifested things (NS IV.I.11-13);
2. Beings originate from non-beings (NS IV.I.14-18);
3. God is the cause of the origin of things (NS IV.I.19-21);
4. Things originate without cause (NS IV.I.22-24);

Among these theories, the second and fourth cannot be accepted from the *Nyāya* point of view. The second theory that things originate from non-being could be taken without any mar to the text as the Buddhist view which is refuted by Gautama. This is also the interpretation of Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara. The fourth theory that things originate without a cause is a denial of the basic tenets of *Nyāya* as the *asatkāryavāda* that it cannot reasonably be taken to be the view of Gautama. Therefore, these two theories cannot be considered to be representing the mind of Gautama. Of the remaining two theories the first one, viz., perceptible things originate from perceptible things can simply be interpreted as the *Nyāya* theory of *asatkāryavāda*, and as such it would articulate the thought of Gautama. This also copes up with the third theory that God is the cause of the world. This position is not against any tenets of *Nyāya* system. It is in perfect

agreement with them and it can be safely assumed that Gautama himself subscribes to the view that God is the cause of the world. Such also is the opinion of all the commentators without exception irrespective of the way in which they arrive at this conclusion. Hence it can be said without any reasonable doubt that, according to Gautama, God is the cause of the world.

Now this chapter examines individually the three theistic *sūtra*s²⁸ quoted earlier in this study. The first aphorism is interpreted as follows by Pakṣilasvāmin: When an individual soul acts with the aim of producing a particular result, it is not the case that always the result in view is attained. Hence we can conclude that an individual soul is not always able to get the result it desired, but that the result of the action depends on somebody else for its attainment. And therefore we can conclude that the one on whom man depends for the fruit of his actions is God.

Pakṣilasvāmin's positions reflect the views held by his Predecessor Uddyotakara. According to Uddyotakara, if an individual soul were able to give upon itself the fruit of its actions, then not even a single action of it would be unable to bring about the desired result. No one wants to cause sorrow for oneself nor does anyone desire that one's actions be without fruit

which one desires and for which one acts. But in our experience we witness the occurrence of both: some actions bring about the desired end and bring us happiness and some other actions do not result the desired end and thus cause us sorrow. This shows that our actions depend upon somebody else in order to bestow their suitable results. And this some one is God who actually imparts on individual souls the fruits of their action²⁹.

An objection is raised against this theory in the second aphorism. Technically, the objection is that there is the fault of ascertaining something that has already been ascertained, or that there is the fault of proving something other than what is to be proved. This objection is explained by Pakṣilasvāmin and Uddyotakara as follows: There is no need of taking God as the cause of the universe. It is enough that actions of man cause the world. It is admitted by all that if there is no action of man and hence no unseen (adṛṣṭa), there would be no result of fruit. If God alone is the cause of the world, then it would naturally follow that even without the actions of man and the consequent unseen, individual souls would be able to experience sorrow or happiness. And, if so, men would not act at all. Further, it would come about that there would be no final release either. The reason for it is that God, who impartially acts, does his act always in the same way

towards everybody. And so, the actions he causes in individual souls will last for ever since he himself is eternal and his nature perpetual. If the actions of man continue, there would be no time when there is absence of action and the unseen. Hence, there would be no final release. But to avoid this fault, if it is proposed that God produces the universe dependent on auxiliary causes, then one has to conclude that he is dependent on them. For all these reasons, the objection states that God is not the cause of the world, but the actions of man and the unseen resulting from them are its true causes.

This objection is answered in the third *sūtra* in the following way: It is not suggested that God produces the world without the help of the unseen which is the fruit of the actions of individual souls. God actually blesses or directs such merits of individuals.

This means that when the particular merit of an individual soul reaches the stage when it is capable of producing a result, God makes that merit actually has the result. Further, God is also the cause of the unseen which produces the results. For these reasons, the objection that the action of man and the unseen consequent upon it produce the world cannot be held. Again because of these causes, such difficulties as the impossibility of final release will not arise. All these objections and difficulties

can be raised only if God is not the cause of the world and of the unseen and if he does not make use of it in bringing about the appropriate fruits for the individual souls according to their actions.

Vācaspati Miśra, one of the greatest commentators of *sūtra*-s however, interprets these *sūtra*-s differently. But still he also comes to the conclusion that the teaching of the *sūtra*-s favors the position that God is the efficient cause of the universe as it has been suggested by both Pakṣilasvāmin and Uddyotakara. The *sūtra*-s immediately preceding these *sūtra*-s confers that the world is produced out of nothingness. Probably because of the similarity with this doctrine-in so far as the material cause of the world is concerned in these aphorisms- that Vācaspati takes these theistic *sūtra*-s as rejecting the *Vedānta* view and simultaneously establishing the *Nyāya* position that God is the efficient cause of the universe. Accordingly, he takes *sūtra* 19 as expressing the *Vedānta* view that *Brahman* is the material cause of the universe.

This different position about these three *sūtra*-s is adopted by Vācaspati Miśra in accordance with the two prevalent traditional theories of causation existing in Indian Philosophical systems as actual transformation (*pariṇāma*) and apparent

transformation (*vivarta*) of *Brahman*. According to the former theory, *Brahman* himself becomes the universe just as a jar, a pot, and so on which are simply different transformations of clay. Quoting Patāñjali's *Mahābhāṣya*³⁰ it is pointed out that such a transformation of *Brahman* does not diminish his eternity since the same thing is recognized also in the thing produced. According to *vivartavāda*, *Brahman* himself, because of his connection with the indescribable and eternal nescience (*avidyā*), transforms himself into the world with its various objects just as one and the same face is reflected in mirror, water and so on. Thus the first *sūtra* is taken to mean by Vācaspati Miśra that in either of these ways, God is to be considered the material cause of the universe. Here the word *Īśvara* is interpreted as Brahman by Vācaspati Miśra because *Īśvara* means one who has *īśāna*, power i.e., power of knowledge (*jñānaśakti*) and power of action (*kriyāśakti*). Now he argues that the first *sūtra* shows also that individual souls cannot be considered the material cause of the universe either by really transforming (*pariṇāma*) themselves into it or by transforming themselves apparently (*vivarta*) into it. The reason is that if an individual soul is really competent of deciding which action is fruitful and which action is not fruitful then individual souls cannot be the material cause of the universe;

therefore, it should be concluded that Brahman is the material cause of the world.

This opinion is denied in *sūtra* 20. *Brahman* cannot be deemed the material cause of the universe either in the sense held by *pariṇā mavāda* or in the sense of *vivartavāda*. This is so because *Brahman* cannot transform himself into the world just as clay is changed into pot, jar, and so on, for, if the whole of *Brahman* so changes, and then he will not anymore be eternal since he has parts. Nor can *Brahman* transform himself apparently into the world in the sense of *vivartavāda*, for it is impossible that the one, indivisible and self-cognizant *Brahman* be the object of doubt. It is not possible to consider *Brahman* whose nature is knowledge itself, be cognized in a general way without cognizing its particularity³¹. Therefore, *Brahman* cannot apparently transform himself into the world. Hence, it is to be concluded that God is the efficient cause of the universe and not its material cause. But being the efficient cause of the universe God makes use of the unseen of individual souls, but it is he who also causes such merit. Therefore, the conclusion is that God is the efficient cause of the universe and not its material cause. But in being the efficient cause of the universe God makes use of the unseen of

individual souls also; for , other wise, there would be the possibility of no release at all as pointed out by Uddyotakara.

According to Vācaspati³², *sūtra* 21 asserts that God is also the cause of the actions of men and the consequent unseen. God makes use of the unseen of individual souls, but it is he who also causes such merit. Therefore, the conclusion is that God is the efficient cause of the universe and not its material cause. From the historical point of view, however, this interpretation of Vācaspati is questionable. There are criticisms against Vācaspati that *Vedāntic* views widespread at the time of the *Nyāyasūtras* inspired him to read his own ideas into the *Nyāyasūtras*.

It is interesting to note that Udayana also follows the same interpretation as that of Vācaspati. Ganganātha Jha informs us that Vardhamāna in his *Nyāyanibhandaprakāśa* also follows this interpretation.³³ In view of these, Vācaspati's interpretation requires careful consideration. It seems that the interpretations of Pakṣilasvāmin and Uddyotakara about these *sūtras* are straighter forward and to the point.

It should be noted however that whatever be the difference in the approach of interpreting the individual *sūtras*, all the commentators without exception come to the conclusion that in

these three theistic *sūtras*, Gautama holds the view that God is the cause of the world. Thus there seems to be no sound doubt in affirming that the meaning of the *sūtras* indeed as in the interpretation of Pakṣilasvāmin and Uddyotakara.

In the light of the diverse interpretations given about the aforementioned *sūtras* it is enviable to probe into the distinct contribution and originality of Gautama regarding the question of God. Although his indications about God do not extend beyond a few lines, it has been of vital importance in the history of *Nyāya*. In one way or another, all the later *Nyāya* authors speak of God as ‘cause’ following the implications of Gautama provided in the *sūtras*. The insight of Gautama that God is to be regarded as the cause of the world has continued as the basis of *Nyāya* theism and for this reason alone Gautama deserves to be called the father of *Nyāya* theism. Further to the above stated references to God as the cause of the world there are also implications providing the similar meaning in the context of the *sūtra* IV.1.19 that God actually confers on man the fruit of his endeavors. Therefore, we can say that according to Gautama’s view God stands supreme not only over the world but even over the inevitable law of *karma*. This position about God implied in the *Nyāya* system advocates that even at the beginning of the formation of it, at least by hint it

highlighted the notion of a transcendent God³⁴. This standpoint is to be understood by the very reasonable supposition that the origin of the idea of God in the *Nyāya* system is linked to religion rather than to an inherent necessity of the philosophical system.

The following section of this chapter tries to elucidate the later developments added to the theistic position of the *Nyāya* system. This explanation is made via the examination of the theistic perspectives of the individual thinkers subsequent to Gautama.

Vātsyāyana Pakṣilasvāmin (about 400 A.D.) : Vātsyāyana's contribution to the interpretation of the theistic *sūtras* in *Nyāyasūtras* has already been discussed, at least in outline in this study. It should be noted that these interpretations had substantially contributed in making these *sūtras* much more intelligible. But there are criticisms against his interpretations that there is nothing very original about his theistic conception. At the same time there is, however, something new when he speaks about the nature of God which has not been clearly described in the *Nyāyasūtras*³⁵. This conception about the nature of God comes at the end of Pakṣilasvāmin's commentary on the last of the three theistic *sūtras*. He states about the nature of God as follows: God

is a soul bestowed with qualities. Since he is a being of the same kind as a soul, he cannot be considered as any other kind of being. God is a soul devoid of demerit, false knowledge, flawed action (*pramāda*), and endowed with merit, right knowledge and perfect concentration (*samādhi*). He has also eight-fold power which is the result of his merit and knowledge³⁶.

As we have already noted in this chapter, in the *Nyāya Sūtras*, we find only the very opening of the development of the idea of God. Yet the fact that Gautama considered God as the cause of the world remained the starting point for the consequent development in *Nyāya* theism all through the centuries. By following the position held by Gautama all the important philosophers in the *Nyāya* system like Uddyotakara, Vācaspati Miśra, Udayana, Gaṅgeśa and others are trying to ascertain God as the prime cause of the world. Therefore, it could be genuinely affirmed that the later developments of *Nyāya* were actually a logical development of the basic perception of the author of the *Nyāya Sūtras*.

In the writings of Vātsyāyana Pakṣilasvāmin there is a further development to the traditional interpretations conferred to the theistic *sūtras* of *Nyāya* along with the rational concept of God as the cause of the world³⁷. We find that Pakṣilasvāmin speaks

about God as a father³⁸. Pakṣilasvāmin's idea of God as father has been taken up soon by such *Naiyāyikas* as Udayana and so on. This proves that some religious ideas already found their way in the *Nyāya* system although these ideas were not philosophically required by the system's rigorous logic.

Uddyotakara (About 1635 A.D.) : Uddyotakara is the author of *Nyāyavārtika*. It is in the work of Uddyotakara, that we find first fully grown logical proofs to establish the existence of God. Uddyotakara is the first philosopher in the *Nyāya* system to use *kāryatva*³⁹ (being an-effect) as the reason in the inference establishing the existence of God. Yet, we do not find in Uddyotakara a comprehensive discussion of this proof or of the logical implications implied in it. Later Vācaspati Miśra developed these components in the inference initially suggested by Uddyotakara in establishing the existence of God.

With reference to the nature of God Uddyotakara attributes to him knowledge. According to him, this knowledge is thoroughly different from the knowledge of individual souls. God's knowledge is eternal because he is the creator of the universe. God's knowledge expands to the past, present and future⁴⁰. And his knowledge is also immediate. All these ideas

make their first appearance in the *Nyāya* tradition in the writings of Uddyotakara.

Vācaspati Miśra (About 841 A.D.) : Vācaspati Miśra is the author of *Nyāyavārtika-Tātparyā-Tīka*. It is at the age of Vācaspati Miśra that the opponents of the *Nyāya* school namely, the Buddhist philosophers belonging to the Dharmakīrti School, begin their relentless criticisms on the *Nyāya* theories regarding God, particularly on the proofs establishing his existence. Dharmakīrti stands at the origin of these criticisms. He denies the very possibility of establishing the existence of God since the inference which the *Naiyāyikas* bring forward to do so are according to him fallacious. This is basically because there is no *sādhya*⁴¹ in the example and, therefore, it is impossible to have the invariable concomitance of ‘having an agent’ in ‘being-an-effect’. This remained the basic objection of the Buddhist school against the *Nyāya* proofs for the existence of God. Later Buddhists like Jñānamiśra and Ratnakīrti developed the details of these arguments. The basic objection remained the same in them as in Dharmakīrti.

Dharmakīrti’s objections also attempt to show that there is an inner contradiction in the idea of an eternal God as it is

forwarded by *Nyāya* theories of God. According to him, God is not the cause of the world before it was created: only at the moment of its creation God is the cause of the world. This shows that there is a change in the nature of God and that which changes cannot be eternal. It is Vācaspati Miśra, the disciple of *Trilocana*, who pointed out the logical and philosophical flaws in these arguments and established the existence of God on a sure basis. And he devoted his attention precisely to show that there is invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-an-effect’. He established that the classes of the things which are effects are experienced to have an intelligent agent⁴². And when we see a thing having the characteristics of ‘being-an-effect’, we can legitimately conclude that effect has an intelligent agent behind the production of it.

This answer of Vācaspati Miśra has been decisive in the sense that the later *Naiyāyikas* like Udayana and Gaṅgeśa developed only the details of this argument. But the basic intuition belonged to Vācaspati Miśra. He was not a mere commentator, but a man of original thinking, at least in certain important respects.

Udayana Ācārya (984 AD) : Udayana is one of the greatest philosopher belonging to the *Nyāya* School. He took up specially the theistic ideas of Vācaspati Miśra and developed them in detail in his independent works like *Ātmatattvaviveka* and *Kusumāñjali*. Udayana allocated much space both in *Ātmatattvaviveka* and *Kusumāñjali* to wage an intellectual war against the arguments of Dharmakīrti School by showing that there is the required invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-an-effect’ concerning the proof given by *Naiyāyikas* for the existence of God. He does so first of all by submitting to severe criticism the arguments which the Buddhists bring forward in refuting the positions held by *Naiyāyikas* by showing their logical inconsistency. We have already seen that the Buddhists’ arguments reject in particular the reason framed by *Naiyāyikas* for ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-an-effect’, which according to Buddhists has an additional condition in order to establish an agent. The arguments of Udayana against Buddhists exhibit intricacy at every level in their development. Udayana discarded the argument of the Buddhists that the inference of the *Naiyāyikas* in order to establish the existence of God suffered from the fallacy of counter thesis.

It is not incorrect to state that Udayana made theism one of the chief concerns of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*. A proper appreciation of his achievement would require a careful study of all his writings. For the present purpose we need only to indicate briefly the contents of the *Kusumāñjali*, a work entirely devoted to the proofs of the existence of God. This book contains 72 *kārikas* (memorial verses), divided into five chapters and accompanied by the author's own commentary.

After two introductory *kārikas*, Udayana states that the Universal belief in a Supreme Being is a sufficient proof for His existence. In his opinion every man irrespective of his differences in ends worship a Supreme Being. Thus the followers of the *Upaniṣads* worship it as the very knower. The disciples of Kapila worship it as the perfect first wise. Those who follow Patāñjali's views consider Him as the One untouched by pain, action, and fruit of desire. Having assumed a body in order to create as it is revealed by the tradition of the Veda and is gracious to all living beings, the *Mahāpāśupatas* regard Him as the Independent one, undefiled by *vaidic* (*Vedic*) or secular violations. For *Śaivas* It presents Itself as *Śiva*. The *Vaiṣṇava* regard Him as *Puruṣottama*. For the followers of the *purāṇas* He is the great Father (*Brahma*). The Ceremonialists consider Him as the Soul of the sacrifice. For

the *Saugatas* he is the Omniscient. For the *Jainas* he is the Unobstructed. The *Mīmāṃsakas* present Him as the one who is pointed out as to be worshipped. The *Cārvākas* speak of Him as the one who is all that is said worthy of Him. Even the artisans worship him as the great artisan Viśvakarman.

Yet according to Udayana, five fold objections is raised against the existence of God. The answer to these objections forms the subject of the five chapters of the *Kusumāñjali*. Udayana's exposition of arguments is complex in nature because he treats many rival theories simultaneously, which are not always directly related to the subject. In the first chapter, e.g., his primary aim is to prove the existence of karma, but he there refutes several other theories of antagonists who admit its existence. For the present we need not explain all these discussions with their implications. In the previous paragraphs we have already seen the positive arguments of Udayana especially that has been posed against Buddhists.

Among the five arguments proposed to prove the existence of *karma*, which are exposed in the first chapter, two may, however, be mentioned here. The first may be summarized as follows: This world, full of sorrow, must be dependent on

something else. It cannot be independent (*nirapekṣa*). If it were independent, it would either be only existing or only non-existing, but it could not have an occasional existence. In the following discussion on causality, the contingency (*kādacitkatvam*) of this world is said to postulate the existence of a cause. In his third argument, Udayana again mentions the universal practice of performing sacrifices as a sufficient proof of the existence of a supra-sensible world. ‘This universal practice cannot be meaningless and ineffectual’.⁴³

The last chapter of the book contains eight different proofs for the existence of God, condensed in the first *kārikā* and developed up to the end of the fifth *kārikā*. Then Udayana gives a new scriptural interpretation of his eight proofs and which incidentally criticize the positions of *Mīmāṃsakas*.⁴⁴

Gaṅgeśōpadyāya and *Taṭṭvacintāmaṇi*: Gaṅgeśa belonged to the 12th century AD. *Taṭṭvacintāmaṇi* is his famous work. This work is considered as a milestone in the whole history of systems of philosophy, especially in *Nyāya*. He is considered as the propounder of the *Navya-Nyāya* system of Logic. *Taṭṭvacintāmaṇi* is an important and immortal work of Gaṅgeśa.

Gaṅgeśa gives significant contribution to the doctrine of God in Indian philosophy and especially to *Nyāya* system.

There is a legend about Gaṅgeśa that, while he was young, was altogether illiterate. He prayed to the goddess Kālī, and acquired a gain to have deep scholarship in the science of Logic. Gaṅgēśa develops a highly technical and sophisticated vocabulary, which is unequalled in its power of clarity. Gaṅgeśa divides his *Taṭtvacintāmaṇi* into four parts dealing with Perception, Inference, Comparison and Verbal testimony respectively. The first part deals with perception. It opens with stanzas saluting God *Śiva*. The salutation is offered to *Śiva* to invoke blessings. In the first part Gaṅgēśa explains the usefulness of invocation of blessings-*Maṅgaḷavāda*. Following the salutation, the theory of valid knowledge and invalid knowledge are discussed. In it the interaction between senses and their objects (*sannikarṣa*) are discussed in detail. The classification of perception into two, *Laukika pratyakṣa* and *Alaukika pratyakṣa* are also discussed there. This discussion elaborates the notion of inherence, the invalidity of non-perception, the existence and characteristic of non-existence, cause of perception, atomic nature of the mind, immediate perception, doctrine of self consciousness and mediate perception.

In the second chapter of this great work, *Anumānakhaṇḍa*, the determination of inferential knowledge, the distinction of inference from perception, five provisional definitions of invariable concomitance etc are included. In this *khaṇḍa* Gaṅgeśa explains the inference of God. Gaṅgeśa' says that by inference we can prove the existence of God. He opines about God as the maker of the universe. The inference that Gaṅgeśa employed here to prove the existence of God is that the universe has a maker, because it is a product like a pot i.e., in making a product like pot, there is an agent- the potter is pre-supposed. In this manner, in the case of the production of binary atomic compound, a desire is emerged in God to make it basic components of the universe. The ātoms by nature are super sensuous, so they can not be perceived by ordinary human being. Hence the producer of the binary atomic compound is an agent, who is not human being but God. So God is accepted as the maker of the universe. Gaṅgeśa discusses the *pakṣa*, *sādhya* and *hetu* of possible inferences to establish the existence of God. The Supreme Being who is the creator of the universe is proved by the inference of the nature of having an agent for the earth and so on, considering their nature of being an effect of a jar⁴⁵.

We see that the *Taṭṭvacintāmaṇi* of Gaṅgeśa has a section on establishing God through inference. From this it is clear that God-concept and theism are vital to the *Nyāya darśana*. According to the *Nyāya darśana*, where as it is possible for *Yōgins* to have '*alaukīka pratyakṣa*' of *Īśvara*, there can not be *alaukīka pratyakṣa*, of *Īśvara*, at all. The only way of achieving cognition about God is then through *Anumāna* which is the powerful means of infallible knowledge.

Gaṅgeśa's contribution towards *Nyāya* theism is reasonably significant in many ways as that of Udayana. In fact, at least in some sense, it is even unique. It is true that Gaṅgeśa draws heavily on the works of previous authors of the System, especially on those of Vācaspati Miśra, Udayana and Śaśadhara. In his *Īśvaravāda*, he completes the method employed by Śaśadhara by discussing in details the subject, the *sādhya* and the reason used in the inference establishing the existence of God. Gaṅgeśa surpasses even Udayana in this respect that the former takes up only the philosophically most important inference to establish the existence of God and discusses and defends it thoroughly.

Gaṅgeśa in his works prepares establishing the inference itself so carefully to see that it in no way fails to meet the

objections of the Buddhists and the *Mīmāṃsakas*. In the discussions of the syllogism Gaṅgeśa covers all the important objections hitherto raised against *Nyāya* theism especially those by the Buddhists. The attempts of Gaṅgeśa reveal that even during the time of him, it was Buddhist ideas that set the most important *pūrvapakṣas* to *Nyāya* arguments. Gaṅgeśa's arguments forwarded to establish the existence of God with such thoroughness and skill show his dialectical skill and originality. It is to be underlined that scholars like Jacobi were not aware of the strength of the thought of Gaṅgeśa, when they opined that in comparison with Udayana, Gaṅgeśa shows no originality. A thorough probe into Gaṅgeśa's works makes it clear that he was not merely a compiler of earlier thought but, on the contrary, he was original in his own way. His contribution to Indian thought in general, and to *Nyāya* tradition in particular, was substantial and even unique.

Now this study likes to concentrate on the intricacies of Gaṅgeśa's arguments that provide the basis for the proofs for the existence of God. We can note that from the philosophical and logical point of view the arguments are centered on the nature and scope of inference.

It is well known that the *Naiyāyikas* and Buddhists of the Dharmakīrti school hold different views regarding inference. The implications of their various theories can best be seen when they apply their logic to the proofs for the existence of God. Now this thesis rests a while on these differences about inference in *Naiyāyikas* and Buddhists of the Dharmakīrti school with special reference to the logic developed based on this concept to either prove or refute the idea of the existence of God.

According to Buddhists, human knowledge is strictly linked to what is directly an experience. In their opinion we can establish the existence of something unknown only if that unknown belongs to the class of things which could be directly experienced. The *Nyāya* system developed by Vācaspati Miśra, Udayana and Gaṅgeśa rejects this epistemological position of the Buddhists. They argue that on the basis of what is known, we can legitimately arrive at the existence of something unknown, even if the unknown does not belong to the class of what is known. This epistemological position of *Nyāya* system helps it to prove the existence of God. This final position of the *Nyāya* system about knowledge was not the result emerged all of a sudden, but it has been logically constructed successively by means of the contributions made by various philosophers of this school.

This central problem of knowledge is discussed at length and in depth by Gaṅgeśa by making use of the full resources of *Nyāya* logic. In *Nyāya* technical terms, the question is whether there is an invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-an-effect’. Gaṅgeśa responds to this question by answering the two of the most important objections of the Buddhists against the reason of the inference establishing the existence of God. According to them, this type of reason is false because it suffers from the faults of having an additional condition and also from having a counter-thesis. It is in criticizing and rejecting these two objections with sufficient reasons that the *Nyāya* arguments to establish the existence of God enter at their rigorous realm with all their details. The depth and the clarity of these arguments simultaneously show the unique contribution of Gaṅgeśa in the development of *Nyāya* theism.

The first objection posed by Buddhists against *Nyāya* theism is that ‘being produced by body’ demands in it an additional condition of ‘being-produced’ which is the reason working behind the *Nyāya* inference establishing the existence of God. The subtle argument behind the objection is that in the example of jar we see the invariable concomitance that supports

the condition ‘being produced’ by an agent. Hence, this additional condition is inherent in the *sādhya*. In the earth, out of which the jar in the example is made, which is the *pakṣa*, there is the reason of ‘being-produced,’ but the additional condition of ‘being-produced-by-body’ is absent. Hence ‘being-produced-by-body’ is *sādhavyāpakam* and at the same time, it is *sādhanāvyāpakam*. Hence, ‘being-produced-by-body’ is an additional condition.

Gaṅgeśa answers this objection by pointing out that under no circumstances there is an additional condition for the reason of ‘being-produced’. The central argument of Gaṅgeśa is that there is invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-produced’ and not in ‘being-produced-by-body’. This is because the true invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ can be understood only in ‘being-produced’ and not in ‘being-produced-by-body’ by means of both positive and negative concomitances. In addition to the first argument Gaṅgeśa opines that the notion of ‘being-produced’ is logically simpler than that of ‘being-produced-by-body’. And hence the invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ is understood only in ‘being-produced’ and not in ‘being-produced-by-body’⁴⁶.

The second important objection against the *Nyāya* reason in the inference establishing the existence of God is that it suffers from the fault of counter-thesis. According to the opponents, the earth and so on are not produced by a maker since they are not produced by a body.

In the answer to this objection given by Gaṅgeśa, we find surprising logical subtleties. As for instance, Gaṅgeśa argues that the opponents try to establish the absence of God who is the counter- positive of the absence. But the existence of God is not yet established and it is impossible to have cognition of an absence without cognizing its counter-positive. Further, it is pointed out that ‘being-produced-by-body’ cannot be the determinant of the invariable concomitance, because of its logical complexity. According to Gaṅgeśa, the determinant can only be ‘being-produced’ due to its simple nature. Only that qualification without which it is not possible to grasp the invariable concomitance, that qualification only becomes part of the determinant of the invariable concomitance. And the qualification ‘by-body’ in the reason of the counter-inference, viz., ‘being-produced-by-body’ is useless. Therefore, we do not cognize the



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invariable concomitance of ‘having-an-agent’ in ‘being-produced-by-body’ but only in ‘being-produced’⁴⁷.

All these technical discussions found in the later *Naiyāyikas*, particularly in Gaṅgeśa, deal with the fundamental philosophical problems of the nature and scope of human knowledge. Basically, *Nyāya* position has tried consistently to show that the nature of human knowledge is such that it is open to the reality of an Absolute that is not the object of immediate sense experience or of an inference based only on such an experience. And the arguments which the important *Naiyāyikas* bring forward in support of this position, which we have described and whose developments we have observed in this thesis is elaborated in the following sections by pointing out the theistic positions held by some of the important *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* thinkers.

2.3 Some *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* writers after Udayanācārya

There were significant attempts in the *Nyāya* tradition in exploring the theistic views after the philosophical attempts held by both Udayana and Gaṅgeśa. The following section of this thesis tries to describe some of the important theistic positions held by thinkers after Udayana.

Jayanta and his *Nyāyamañjari* (About 829 A.D.) : *Nyāyamañjari* is Jayanta's commentary on the *Nyāya sūtras* of Gautama. It deals with the *Nyāya* themes under two titles i.e., *Pramāṇa* and *prameya*.

Jayanta begins his work with the salutation of Lord *Śiva*. He writes sixteen verses as *maṅgaḷa*. In this work Jayanta elaborately discusses the sixteen categories of the *Nyāya*. He defines *pramāṇās* or instruments of knowledge as the collection of all the conditions of true judgment⁴⁸. He accepts four *Pramāṇās*. He was a staunch supporter of the extrinsic validity of knowledge. With reference to the theory of error he treats of *Asatkhyāti*, *Ātmakhyāti*, and *Anyathākhyāti*. According to him, the validity of verbal authority is extrinsic. Jayanta objects the Cārvāka view that the Vedas are produced by men.

Jayanta firmly states that God exists. He says that if the *Vedas* do have an author, then that author must be God. In his *Nyāyamañjari* Jayanta first sets forth the arguments propounded by the opponents and then refute all and finally state that God exist. In *Nyāyamañjari* the opponent's arguments are presented by Jayanta as follows: 1. God is not perceived. 2. And therefore He cannot be inferred. 3. God's works, "creations" e.g. - hills, are not

products since they are unlike pots etc, which are the products of man's handiwork. 4. In any case, not all products are products of man's handiwork, and therefore not all products are products of God's handiwork. 5. If God were inferred by analogy, then he would like a potter. But a potter has a body that moves his limbs, and he is not omniscient, while God is held to have the opposite qualities. 6. If God has a body then we must know the creator of it. It is created not by him, and then obviously we have to postulate another God as the creator of the first God's body. Such an argument generates infinite regress. 7. God cannot create by bodily movement or by mere willing, because if the creation is by bodily movements, then it would take too long a time. It cannot be by mere willing, because the willing cannot affect the courses of ātoms. 8. God does not act from motive. If so, God is not perfectly blissful. If not, then He behaves like an insane person. Then one can argue that He creates out of compassion. But then the reason for sorrow cannot be explained. 9. Since merit and demerit is sufficient to guide destiny, God is not needed to command them. 10. And if He is brought in to guide merit and demerit then He becomes dependent on them. 11. If it is held that God creates for sport (*Līla*) then it must be pointed out that in between cycles there is no sport

and thus no reason for creation, nor should a good God be edified by this showy display of a world.¹²If God is made absolutely responsible for the state of the world then (a)God’s goodness must be rejected.(b)the *Vedic* injunctions become pointless (c) the hypothesis of liberation must be abandoned.

Jayanta opposes all these arguments and state that God can be inferred from our experience⁴⁹. He considers that the world is an effect. The inference of Jayanta is that God exists, because He produces an effect of a type whose existence presupposes the existence of someone who knows the process and motive of its production, like that of a jar. *Mīmāṃsā* points out that the mountains are effects but they are destructible. The Buddhist view of everything is transitory. According to Jayanta, “To be an effect” means “having parts”. By holding this position Jayanta denies the Buddhist principle of ‘*apōha*’ i.e., a thing means the absence of the absence.

In *Nyāya Mañjari* there is a brief discussion of another proposed proof for God’s existence. The eternal nature of God’s attributes is proved there. According to Jayanta, the will of God is eternal. It produces temporary effects by its connection with non-eternal objects. At the same time he holds that God is incorporeal

in nature. God can will physical results just as we will our bodies to move. In answer to the objection with reference to God's motive that God should not produce sorrow if he is compassionate, Jayanta says that God must provide a place (Hell) for people whose karma is bad, to correct their ways and seek salvation anew. The time between cycles is produced by God to give the selves periodic rest from their labor.

Jayanta also refutes Kumāṛila's view that God is unnecessary because the merit and demerit of the selves produce all effects. As a reply to this position Jayanta says that the world needs a master- builder. That master- builder is God⁵⁰.

In relation to the authorship of *Vedas* also Jayanta tries to prove the existence of God. In this argument he rejects the position held by *Mīmāṃsakas*. The *Mīmāṃsakas* say that the Vedas are not man-made. Jayanta opposes this opinion and states that Vedas are written by individual and that individual is God. Jayanta says that no one has seen the *Vedas* being composed, so perception is not a proper instrument to prove the knowledge about the authorship of *Vedas*. Inference also cannot prove that *Vedas* have author⁵¹.

The *Vedās* actually says that Prajāpati created the *Vedās*. The epic says that Vyāsa wrote *Mahabhārata*. It is an acceptable

fact, like wise, the inference in the case of the *Vedas* is sufficient to show that they were created by God. God, who created the world created the *Vedas* also. The words and their meanings are established by God. According to Jayanta, God created the *Vedas* to convey meanings already established by God.

The validity of the *Vedās* is due to their being spoken by trustworthy people, and not because of their eternity. In the second part of *Nyāyamañjari*, Jayanta states that the self is perceptible and inferable as well. And it proves the existence of *adr̥ṣṭa*. He describes at the time of discussing the topic rebirth, the process of the construction of human body, which emerges from ātoms with the assistance of God, the agency behind creation.

Varadarāja and His *Tārkikarakṣa* (About 1150 A.D.) :Varadarāja, the author of the *Tārkikarakṣa* belonged to the 11th century. He deals with all the sixteen categories of the *Nyāya*. Under the title of *prameya* he includes all the twelve objects of *Nyāya* beginning from Atman and the six categories of the *Vaiśeṣika* beginning from *dravya*. The literary meaning of the word *Tārkikarakṣa* is protection of logicians. *Tārkikarakṣa* is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the first fourteen categories of the *Nyāya* i.e., from *pramāṇa* to *chala*. The second chapter

deals with the fifteenth category viz., *jāti* and the third chapter deals with the sixteenth category viz., *Nigrahasthāna*.

In the *Tārkikarakṣa*, Varadarāja argues that there is nothing improper in applying to God ‘valid knowledge’, which would be not applicable to erroneous *hetūs* given by selves other than God. There is no regular relation between selves and valid knowledge. There are two kinds of valid knowledge: eternal and non-eternal. The locus of eternal knowledge is God. Varadarāja in his own commentary on *Tārkikarakṣa* viz., *Sārasaṃgraha* adds that according to *Nyāya* system, the knower (*pramātr*) experiences validity through its invariable concomitance with God’s knowledge. In this work he establishes perception and inference as the valid instruments of knowledge. Varadarāja says that perception is also an attribute of God. He remarks that ‘*Śiva* is my valid instrument of knowledge’.

***Tarkabhāṣa* of Keśavamiśra (About 1275 A.D.) :** *Tarkabhāṣa* is the only work under the authorship of Keśavamiśra. His time is around the middle part of the 13th century. The work *Tarkabhāṣa* is divided into two main portions. They are *Pramāṇa* portion (*pūrvabhāga*) and *Prameya* portion (*uṭṭarabhāga*).

The first portion mainly deals with the four *pramāṇās* and *hetvābhāsa*. The *prameya* portion deals with the twelve *prameyas* that are mentioned in the *Nyāya-Sūtra*. According to *Tarkabhāṣa*, the first *prameya* is Soul or '*Ātman*'. Keśavamiśra defines atman as follows: "*Ātma* possess of the generality namely *Ātmatva*". It is different from the body and sense organs. It is different in everybody. It is eternal and all pervading. It is perceptible by mind⁵². If this is not acceptable, atman is also inferable from *Hetūs*, *Buddhi* etc.,⁵³. *Buddhi* is a special quality. But it is not the quality of earth. It is not perceptible by the sense organs; but only perceptible by the mind. *Buddhi* is not a quality related to space, time and mind because their qualities are not special qualities. Their qualities are all common qualities. It is not the quality of space because its quality is perceptible by only one sense organ. Based on this argument Keśavamiśra states that we have to deduce a locus of the special qualities like *Buddhi* to reside. This locus should be different from all other substances and that substance is *Ātman*. This *Ātman* is possible because of *vibhutva* itself. *Ātman* is eternal like the ether. This *Ātman* is different in everybody, because happiness, sorrow etc., are different in each body.

Keśavamiśra mentions about sixteen categories of *Nyāya*. Under *prameyas* twelve *prameyas* beginning from *Ātman* are explained. He admits four kinds of valid knowledge that were accepted by the *Naiyāyikas* i.e., Perception, Inference, Comparison and Verbal testimony. The soul possesses the generality soul-ness. It is eternal and omni-present. It is different in each body and also distinct from the body and sense organs. Even if it is perceptible by mind it can be inferred from the presence of special qualities like knowledge. It can be inferred by the reasons of both positive and negative qualities. In *Tharkkabhāṣa* it is said that knowledge resides in a substance different from the other eight substances. According to Keśavamiśra, knowledge is a quality that does not belong to the traditional enlisting of the substances eight in number. In his opinion *Ātman* is a substance that is different from other eight substances. This *Ātman* is omnipresent, omnipotent and is different in each body.

***Nyāyalīlavathy* of Vallabhācārya (12th century AD) :** Vallbha discusses his philosophy of God in *Nyāyalīlavathy*. His inference to establish the existence of God is same as those of the earlier *Nyāya* authors. Vallabha establishes God as the agent of creation of this universe. That which is the object of discussion, he argues, has an agent because it is an effect like a jar. Being an agent

means, to have direct knowledge of the material cause of earth and so on of creation. Hence the individual souls can not be its makers. Therefore, according to Vallabha, there is no fault of establishing God as the agent of creation.

With the limited knowledge individual souls cannot become the agent of the universe. One who has the direct knowledge of the material cause of the earth and so on only can be its agent. The agent who has got direct knowledge of material cause of earth and so on is considered as God .This agent is not embodied. In the case of the production of a jar an agent with body is established. In the same way an agent without body is established in the case of the production of the material cause of earth and so on. Vallabhācārya states that ‘being an effect’ there must be ‘having an agent’. The universe being an effect presupposes an agent, who is nothing but the Supreme –Soul “*Īśvara*”

Tarkkaṣaṃgraha of Annambhaṭṭa (1623AD) : *Tarkkaṣaṃgraha* is one of the excellent work on *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. Annambhaṭṭa is the author of this work. Annambhaṭṭa has also written a commentary on *Tarkkaṣaṃgraha* named *Dīpika*. These works, *Tarkkaṣaṃgraha* and *Dīpika*, are known together as *Annambhaṭṭīyam*. Annambhaṭṭa begins his *Tarkkaṣaṃgraha* with

the benedictory verse to Lord *Śiva* and to the preceptor. “Placing the Lord of the Universe in my heart and making obeisance to my preceptor, I compile this *Tarkkasamgraha* to enable beginners to understand the dialectical philosophy easily”.

This work deals with the seven categories of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* school viz., substance, quality, action, generality, particularity, inherence and non-existence. After mentioning the categories, Annambhaṭṭa explains the characteristics of each of them and their divisions, beginning from the substances. The soul comes as the eighth substance. Annambhaṭṭa defines soul as the substratum of knowledge . It is of two kinds viz., the supreme soul and the individual soul. Of these the supreme soul is omnipotent and omniscient and one only. The individual soul is different in each body. It is all pervading and eternal.

The characteristic mark of the supreme soul is said as lordliness consists in being the substratum of eternal knowledge. It is in this context that Annambhaṭṭa deals with the doubts about the proof for the existence of *Īśvara* proposed by antagonists of his system of thinking. If *Īśvara* is perceptible it must be either via external perception i.e., perceivable by the external sense organ, like eye or should be via internal perception i.e. perceived by the

mind. It is accessible definitely not by External perception because *Īśvara* is not having shape or color. It is also not reachable by internal perception because He is free from the feelings of pain, pleasure etc., which are felt by the individual soul. The supreme soul cannot be inferred because of the lack of similar instance to support the inference. Nor verbal testimony can prove His existence, because of the lack of Vedic texts establishing His existence.

In reply to these objections, Annambhaṭṭa says in his *Dīpika* that, it is not correct as it is argued by the opponents that we cannot prove the existence of God by way of means of knowledge. He states that earth, sprouts etc are caused by some agent since they are products like a jar. Thus the existence of *Īśvara* is also proved by inference, which is a means of knowledge. Agent is one who possesses an immediate knowledge of the inherent causal apparatus, a will to act and an effort. Inherent cause is the material cause. Omniscience consists in possessing a direct knowledge of all subtle substances like ātoms. *Vedic* sentences like, He who is the omniscient is also the immediate knower of everything etc are the proofs for the existence of *Īśvara*.

According to Annambhaṭṭa, the inference about God is as follows: Every effect is produced by a causal agent e g: a pot is produced by an agent. A dyad is the smallest component of the element. Earth as an element is an effect. Therefore must be produced by a causal agent. This causal agent is God. No human being can be possibly an agent in the production of a dyad, which is formed of two ātoms. The *ātoms* are not perceived by any human or sub human agent. It therefore logically demands the existence of a super-human agent. He has to be postulated to explain the creation of the world. This theistic view of Annambhaṭṭa is elaborately stated in his *Tarkasaṃgraha* and *Dīpika* as the proof for the existence of God.

Viśvanātha Nyāya pañcānana and *Siddhānta Muktvāli* (1634 AD) : Viśvanātha is the author of the famous work on *Vaiśeṣika* called *Bhāṣāpariccēda*. The author is also known by the name Pañcānana Viśvanātha. He has written a commentary on his own work, *Bhāṣāpariccēda* named *Siddhānta Muktvāli*. The word *Siddhānta Muktvāli* literally means the rows of pearls of logical truths. Viśvanātha opens his *Bhāṣāpariccēda* with a saluting verse to *Śrīkrṣṇa*. In *Siddhānta Muktvāli* Viśvanātha salutes *Śiva* and invokes *Śiva's* blessings⁵⁴.

Bhāṣāpariccēda deals with seven categories of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system: Substance, quality, action, generality, particularity and non-existence. The substance is again divided into nine viz., earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, soul and mind. The soul is the abode of intellect and several other qualities.

There are other thinkers also in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system who had dealt with the proofs for the existence of God. In order to avoid the overlapping of themes, this study does not mention about their contributions to the theistic position in this system of thought. So far we had seen almost all the major figures that are regarded as the corner stones of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. After studying their theistic positions this thesis in the following section attempts to describe the theme of the Nature of God as it is presented in the works of the great authors of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system.

2.4 The Nature of God in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*

In this section of the thesis we shall see the nature of God as it is described by various thinkers of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* System in different periods of time. In the previous section of this study we have already seen how the different phases of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* System tried to prove the existence of God. The thinkers

of this system had viewed the nature of God in manifold ways. The most common traits of God advanced by these thinkers are elaborated in the following section of this study.

The *Nyāya Bhāṣya* is the first work of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* which contains a description of the divine nature⁵⁵. There God is said to be a special soul. There is no demerit, no error and no negligence or inadvertence in this special soul. On the other hand, God's most characteristic quality is knowledge. He also possesses concentration (*samādhi*) and merit (dharma or good karma). His omnipotence (*aiśvarya*) which consists in the eight magical powers (*aṇimān*, etc.), is due to this merit and concentration. This merit matches His wishes (*saṃkalpāṇuvidhyāti*). It triggers (*pravartayati*) not only the accumulated merit and demerit (i.e., the *karma*) of each individual soul but also the earth and the other elements.

God creates according to the law of *karma*. He gives each being the fruit of its actions. He is perfectly free when creating, since *karma* is made by Him. (This is the most probable interpretation of the text, which may also mean: Since God creates through the instrumentality of His own *karma*, the instrumentality of His own *karma*, which He Himself made and which conforms

to His wishes). He has no unfulfilled desires. He acts as a father who acts on behalf of his children. This means that God acts for the sake of His creatures.

God is praised in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system as the revealer of Vedas. The terminology chosen by Uddyotakara and Vācaspati to speak about God as revealer of the Vedas clearly proves that they borrowed their views from Yoga. In their descriptions about the nature of God we meet with technical terms of *Yoga* : *Pramāda*, *Samādhi*, the eight *siddhis* and *prākamyam* (freedom of God in creating). Knowledge, as the characteristic quality of *Īśvara*, is also an idea borrowed from Yoga.⁵⁶

Praśastapāda does not attempt to give a description of God's nature as Vātsyāyana had done. We, therefore, know very little about his philosophical concept of God. He assigns the activities of periodical creation and dissolution to the desire of the experience achieved by living beings and destroys it again to give these same beings a rest, wearied as they are by their transmigrations⁵⁷. But Praśastapāda refers to the creative power of God's intellect. According to him, it is God's intellect (*apekṣā-buddhi*) which is responsible for the duality and plurality in the ātoms. Especially it is required after the production of the four

gross elements (*mahābhūta*) in the process of creation. The great egg is brought into existence, out of the fire and earth *ātoms*, by the mere thought of *Maheśvara*.⁵⁸ But *Maheśvara* is not classified under any category. His desire and His knowledge are not mentioned by Praśastapāda when he speaks of the qualities of God. He distinguishes, e.g., four kinds of knowledge, the highest (*ārṣa*) being that of the Sages, who have composed the *Vedas*.⁵⁹ The highest knowledge perceives past, present and future events and extends to such supra-sensible entities as merit. But according to Praśastapāda as this knowledge is due to special merit and is caused by the contact of the soul and the mind, it cannot be ascribed to the divine intellect. We can say that Praśastapāda's concept of God is much religious than philosophical. God is the Great Lord (*Maheśvara*), the Ruler of all the worlds⁶⁰. He creates and destroys for the sake of others.

The difficult problem of reconciling God's power with the rigid law of karma has not been solved by Praśastapāda. He simply states that, during the dissolution, the souls remain instilled by the impression of merit and demerit (*dharma*, *adharma*, *saṃskāra*, *anuviddāḥ*). At the time of creation *Maheśvara* produces *Brahmā* and gives him the task of creating the various beings according to their previous deeds (*prāṇinām*

karmavipākam viditvā)⁶¹. Later, it is the description of god's nature given by Vātsyāyana has been taken up and developed by the subsequent authors. In the following pages we shall analyze the nature of God as it has been conceived by Uddyotakara and Vācaspati. The differences of opinion of later *Naiyāyikas* of the old school are also referred to in the following section.

Differences between *Īśvara* and Common Souls : When we speak about God's nature in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, it should be remembered that the system had already been in a matured state when the existence of God was recognized by it. Uddyotakara is the first *Naiyāyika* to give a systematic description of the divine nature in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. In his time the number of categories, the nine substances and their qualities, as explained by Praśastapāda, had been generally accepted. The author of the *Vārtika* had therefore no other choice but to examine under which category *Īśvara* could be classified and which qualities are applied to Him. In a dramatic tone he begins his investigation into the nature of God by saying: 'Since we possess no exact knowledge about the nature of God, the doubt arises whether He is a substance, a quality of one or the other categories given.'⁶²

Applying the method of *Vaiśeṣika*, which describes the essence of the categories ‘by means of their resemblances and differences’⁶³, Uddyotakara moves to analyze which qualities of the common soul belong to God and which do not.

From Uddyotakara’s description we can deduce the following points with regard to God’s nature. According to him, *Īśvara* is not a common soul because He has qualities that differ from those of the soul⁶⁴. The main difference between *Īśvara* and soul and *Īśvara*’s superiority over soul consist in the eternity of God’s knowledge.⁶⁵ Consequently, Uddyotakara holds that God possesses six qualities: knowledge and the five generic qualities. But he also speaks of God’s activity and desire and acknowledges that there are therefore eight qualities in *Īśvara*.

Common souls have got nine specific qualities; six of these do not seen in God. They are pleasure, pain, aversion, impression, merit and demerit. Three of them, viz., demerit and its consequences, pain and aversion, are naturally not ascribed to God by the *Naiyāyikas*. The school also agrees with Uddyotakara in eliminating impression as a quality resides in god. Impression is the cause of remembrance. According to Uddyotakara, ‘Since God’s intellection is eternal it leaves no impression’.⁶⁶

Among *Naiyāyikas* there is no agreement concerning the attribution of qualities merits and pleasure in God. Merit (*dharma*) is explicitly rejected by Uddyotakara and Vācaspati. But it had been accepted by Vātsyāyana, and was ascribed again to God by Jayanta Bhaṭṭa in his *Nyāya Mañjari*⁶⁷.

Pleasure (*sukha*), although not explicitly rejected, is not attributed as a quality to God neither by Uddyotakara nor by Vācaspati. Nor was it generally assigned to God by other *Naiyāyikas*. Although Udayana calls God, the Ocean of joy (*Ānandanidhi*) in the last *kārikā* of his *Kusumāñjali*, he holds that there are only three specific qualities in *Īśvara*. Śrīdhara explicitly affirms that pleasure is not found in God. But the *Nyāyasāra* and the *Nyāya-Mañjari* attribute it to God. The *Nyāyasāra* refers to pleasure when proving that liberation consists in pleasurable consciousness⁶⁸. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa supposes its existence in God from reason. According to him, an *Īśvara* without pleasure would be in poor condition to begin the work of creation.⁶⁹

Uddyotakara mentions a few more differences between God and the common soul. In his view, as *Īśvara* does not experience pain, He is not bound to earthly existence; nor is He indifferent to the world. He cannot be called ‘liberated’ (*mukta*).

According to Uddyotakara, God is not bound at any time. Uddyotakara is the first among *Naiyāyikas* to prove that God is not endowed with a body. He proves this point when he refutes the objection that knowledge is connected with the possession of a body⁷⁰. Here he is arguing against the position of *Yoga*, which teaches that *Īśvara* assumes a *sattva* of perfect quality. If God had a body, argues Uddyotakara, that body would be either eternal or non-eternal. A non-eternal body would mean that God possessed merit and demerit (as causes of His body). In that case He would be subject to merit and demerit and consequently He would no more be the Lord.⁷¹ On the other hand an eternal body is contrary to our experience. According to Uddyotakara, we can prove the eternity of knowledge without assuming the possibility of a body. Vācaspati also answers to the objection that knowledge postulates a body. Udayana, too, deals at some length with this objection and maintains that God is not endowed with a body of His own; he adds, however that at the beginning of each new creation God assumes a body to teach the traditional arts.

The Eight Qualities of Īśvara.

The five Generic Qualities: According to *Naiyāyikas*, God belongs to the category of substance. Consequently He has got the five generic qualities common to all substances. Both material and

immaterial qualities are attributed to Him. Uddyotakara is the first *Naiyāyika* who proposed such a theistic position. But he does not explain how these qualities are applied to *Īśvara*. He has borrowed the theory of generic qualities from *Praśastapāda*, and simply states that they belong to God. Later *Naiyāyikas* also are not much clear about this point. The five generic qualities attributed to all substance are Number (*saṃkhyā*), Dimension (*parimāṇa*), Individuality (*prthaktva*), Conjunction (*saṃyoga*) and Disjunction (*vibhāga*).

Number (*saṃkhyā*): It is the instrumental cause of the application of the terms one, two, three etc. Unity stands apart from the other numbers. It is a reality independent of the intellect. The number one is eternal in the eternal substances and temporary in the products. According to the prevalent opinion among *Naiyāyikas*, duality and the other numbers are not absolute realities. But still in *Nyāya* schools, duality is said to be revealed by relating-cognition. But it exists independently of cognition. Udayana, however, has built one of his proofs for the existence of God on the assumption that duality is produced by knowledge.

A general position about this notion is that they depend for their existence on a relating cognition (*apekṣa-buddhi*) which produces them in the perceived objects. We first perceive two

objects separately as two units and then through our relating cognition duality is produced and inhered in both objects. This is followed by the intellection about the general notion of duality. The other numbers are similarly built up out of unities just as the material products are produced out of ātoms. They all vanish together with the transient relating cognition. This theory was first introduced into the school by Praśastapāda.

Dimension (*Parimāṇa*): It forms the basis of measurement. It is of four kinds: minute (*aṇu*), large (*mahat*), long (*dīrgha*) and short (*hrasva*). Eternal dimensions are the extreme magnitude (*paramamahattva*) of the unlimited substances (the soul including *Īśvara*, ether, space and time) and the absolute minuteness (*aṇutva* or *parimaṇḍalyam*) of the ātoms and of the mind. The transient dimensions are understood according to the process of production. Even after its production a binary atom is still imperceptible. In such a situation it possesses created minuteness (*aṇutva*) and shortness (*hrasatva*). These both are produced by the duality of the components. This duality itself is produced by the relating power of God's eternal intellect. He can alone perceive the ātoms at the beginning of creation. The molecules have got the properties of length (*dīrghatva*) and largeness or limited magnitude (*mahattva*). This is caused by the joining of the three binary ātoms out of

which the molecules are composed. The mass of the molecules is due again to the relating intellect of *Īśvara*.⁷² The dimensions of molecules are perceptible together with the other specific qualities of the component ātoms.

Individuality (*Pr̥thaktva*): It is the quality of separateness. It is the proximate cause of our separating one substance from another. It is different from the category of reciprocal non-being by the fact that it is real, but not rational in character.

Conjunction (*saṃyoga*): It can be explained as the contact between two substances which have been originally apart from each other.

Disjunction (*vibhāga*): is the state of separation between things which have somehow been united earlier. Both are caused by motion and consequently there can be no conjunction or disjunction between two all-pervading substances since neither of them can move. No author in *Nyāya* school explains how the last two qualities are applied to God.

Three specific Qualities

Knowledge (*Buddhi*): Among the three specific qualities ascribed to God, knowledge is considered by the *Naiyāyikas* to be the most characteristic and the most important. Uddyotakara teaches that

God's knowledge is eternal and that through it all things past, present, and future are directly perceived. God has therefore no memory. God does not obtain His knowledge through inference or scripture. Vācaspati further adds that God's knowledge is not acquired through any of the four *pramāṇas*-perception, inference, comparison and testimony. It is not dependent on the senses. Since it is eternal it is based on direct intuition.⁷³

Desire (*icchā*) and Activity (*Prayatna*) : *Nyāya Bhāṣya* had indirectly admitted the existence of desire in *Īśvara*, when it said that God's merit conforms to His wishes (*saṃkalpa*). Praśastapāda mentions about God's desire to create and to destroy the universe. Uddyotakara is the first *Naiyāyika* to use the word *icchā* as the specific quality of *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* has desire, which is untainted and unimpeded as is His knowledge.⁷⁴ Vācaspati is the first to use the word *prayatna* for *Īśvara*. Although Uddyotakara does not use the word, he admits that *prayatna* belongs to God's very essence.⁷⁵ Uddyotakara points out that God's desire is unimpeded (*avyāhatāssarvārtheṣu*). Vācaspati mentions about the intimate and inseparable connection between knowledge, desire and activity. He also argues that the existence of knowledge in God proves the existence of the two other qualities. 'Gods desire

and activity are as eternal as His knowledge and must therefore be considered as implied in the proof that He is the Maker (of the world). The reason is that being a Maker consists in the inseparable connection of knowledge, desire and activity; and since these three qualities are inseparably connected with one another, the ascertainment of one of them proves the existence of the two others also'.⁷⁶

Other Attributes of Īśvara

Unicity. Uddyotakara is the first *Naiyāyika* to point out the attribute of unicity in God. He gives the same argument for it as used by the *Yoga-Bhāṣya*⁷⁷. This argument is the objection against the view that there are several Gods. Uddyotakara states that if there are two Gods then their opposing wishes with regard to one and the same object are in trouble. Due to their differing wishes there can be no activity (and neither can be called God in its true sense). If one, however, prevails in His wish, then He is the *Īśvara* and not the other. (Ibid).

Omnipotence (*aiśvarya*) : The *Nyāya-Bhāṣya* is the first document of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system to mention about the omnipotence of *Īśvara*. It is evident that Vātsyāyana borrowed this idea from *Yoga* because he says that God's omnipotence consists in the

eight magical powers usually ascribed to the *Yogis*. According to Vātsyāyana, God's omnipotence springs from His merit. This merit is the instrument by which *Īśvara* exercises His magical powers and activates the individual *karma* of men, the earth and the other elements. Both Uddyotakara and Vācaspati present their own views on Gods *aiśvarya*, when they comment on the above position of Vātsyāyana about this point. They explain that there is no need to suggest merit as an instrument of God's activity.

Uddyotakara teaches that God's omnipotence is eternal and therefore not caused by his merit. He explains about *Īśvara's* control of karma by pointing to the relation between God and individual souls. He is not able to decide whether this relation is all pervading (*vyāpaka*) or not. He is doubtful about whether or not it entirely pervades God and the soul. He simply states that there is no sense in this consideration. In his opinion one can state at the most that there exists a relation between God and the individual soul'.⁷⁸

In His commentary on the *Yoga- Bhāṣya*, Vācaspati defines the omnipotence of God as the perfect power in Him to know and to act. He uses the same expression (*jñāna-kriyāśakti*) when he states that all effects whatsoever are sufficiently accounted for by

God's eternal knowledge and power, and that there is therefore no need to admit any merit in *Īśvara*.⁷⁹ God's knowledge and His power to act are eternal; consequently His omnipotence is also eternal.⁸⁰

The description given in this chapter outlines the important theistic positions elaborated by the thinkers in The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. The multifarious arguments presented by these thinkers to prove the existence of God show the fact that even within their stringent philosophical arguments they cannot evade the question of God as it is always in the fore of Philosophical thinking. From this elaboration of the theistic position held by one of the Oldest Philosophical systems of India, this thesis moves to another Philosophical System, *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, that had rendered much of its effort on the elaboration of the question of God.

NOTES

- ¹ VS., III.2.4., Vaiśeṣika sūtra expounds the basic tenets of the Vaiśeṣika system. It is difficult to find in what order the sūtras are arranged. This work consists of ten chapters; the first seven are each divided into two sections (āhnikas).
- ² The Vaiśeṣika System. p. 309.
- ³ Pr.Bh.,p.20.
तद्वचनादाम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम् ।।
- ⁴ VS., I.1.1.
अथातो धर्मं व्याख्यास्यामः ।
- ⁵ Ibid., I.1.2
यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः ।
- ⁶ Ibid., I.1.3
- ⁷ Ibid., I.1.2
- ⁸ Ibid., I.1.4
द्रव्यगुणकर्मसामान्यविशेषसमवायानांपदार्थानां ... ।
- ⁹ Ibid., 3.2.4
प्राणाऽपाननिमेषोन्मेषजीवनमनोगतीन्द्रियान्तरविकाराः
सुखदुःखेच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नाश्चात्मनो लिङ्गानि ।
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 1.1.4
धर्मविशेषप्रसूताद्द्रव्यगुणकर्मसामान्यविशेषसमवायानांपदार्थानां साधर्म्यवैधर्म्याभ्यां तत्त्वज्ञानान्निःश्रेयसम् ।
- ¹¹ Ibid., VI.2.16
अत्मकर्मसु मोक्षो व्याख्यातः ।
- ¹² Pr.Bh., p.20
- ¹³ Ibid.,p.576
- ¹⁴ Ibid.,p.621
- ¹⁵ Ibid.,p.20.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.,p.277
- ¹⁷ Ibid.,p.471
- ¹⁸ NS.,IV.1.19-21
- ¹⁹ Ibid.1.1-26
- ²⁰ N.Sa.,p.84.
- ²¹ NS.,II.1.68
मन्त्रायुर्वेदप्रामाण्यवच्च तत्प्रामाण्यम् - आप्तप्रामाण्यात् ।
- ²² M.Hiriyanna : It is instructive to note that in all probability the belief neither in God nor in the Veda was originally a party of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika teaching. Outlines of Indian Philosophy, London, 1932, p.259
- ²³ NS., II.1.68
- ²⁴ Ibid., IV.1.19
- ²⁵ Ibid.,IV.1.20
- ²⁶ Ibid.,IV.1.21
- ²⁷ For instance, Ruben (Die Nyāyasūtra-s , note, 250) and , probably following him, Bulcke also (The Theism of Nyāyavaiśeṣika, p.32) think that there is a contradiction here in the sūtras and that the interpretation of Vātsyāyana does not do justice to the text of the sūtra-s. According to them, the contradiction lies in the fact that Vātsyāyana interprets karma as samīhā (striving after) in order to avoid this contradiction. However, there seems to be no need to see a

- contradiction here, in spite of the opinions of Ruben and others; we can as well as accept the interpretation of Vātsyāyana according to whom karma here is to be understood as samīhā
- 28 NS.,IV.1.19-21.
- 29 N.V.,I.19.p.468-69
- 30 Tadapi nithyam yasminstattvam na vihanyate : That also is eternal in which the characteristic of ‘being that’ (tattvam) is not destroyed. (The Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, Vol.I.p.641)
- 31 When Brahman is mistaken for the world, there should be a general cognition of Brahman and the absence of the knowledge of Brahman as Brahman. However such a general cognition of Brahman and absence of the knowledge of Brahman as Brahman are impossible since Brahman is in the form of knowledge.
- 32 N.V.T.T., IV.1.21.pp.419-20
- 33 Ganganath Jha has the following remarks : “In view, perhaps of the fact that such an interpretation of the section is inconsistent with the introductory assertion of the previous bhāṣya-‘we now proceed to show up the view of philosophers’- the tātparya followed by the parīśuddhi and prakāśa has taken it as representing the criticism of the vedānta doctrine that — ‘God is the constituent cause of the universe’. By this interpretation sūtra 19 represents the Vedānta view, sūtra 20 shows the untenability of that view and sūtra 21 puts forward the final Nyāya-siddhānta that the God is the creator, the operative cause, not the constituent cause, of the universe. (Gautama’s Nyāya-Sūtras with Vātsyāyana bhāṣya, translated by Ganganath Jha, Poona : Oriental Book Agency, 1939, p.420)
- 34 It may be pointed out that since Gautama in the Nyāya Sūtras IV.1.19-21 asserts that God actually confers on man the fruit of his works, it is possible to think that God of the Nyāya system, even in its beginning, is at least by implication a transcendent God, and not entirely immanent to the system itself. This implies that such a God stands above also the universal law of karma.
- 35 N.Bh.,IV.1.21
गुणविशिष्टमात्मान्तरमीश्वरः तस्यात्मकल्पात् कल्पान्तरानुपपत्तिः
अधर्ममिथ्याज्ञानप्रमादहान्या धर्मज्ञान-समाधिसम्पदा च विशिष्टमात्मान्तरमाद्यवृद्धिमैश्वर्यम् ।
सङ्कल्पानुबिधायी चास्य धर्मः ।
- 36 Ibid.,IV.1.19-21
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.,IV.1.21
- 39 ND., p.957,
एवं कार्यत्वात् तृणादीनी पक्षीकृत्या दर्शनस्पर्शनविषयत्वा दिति वक्तव्यम् । एवं यत्र यत्र विप्रतिपत्तिः
कार्यत्वम् च तत् तत् अनेनैव न्यायेनानेन दृष्टान्तेन वात्स्यादीना पक्षयित्व साधयितव्यम् । The
bodies consist of elements which are activated by a special quality of individual souls, because they are effects. They are also capable of (helping them) in their purposeful actions. That which is useful for the purpose of individuals is observed as consisting of elements which are activated by a special quality of individual souls. This like a cart and so on which are fit for helping the purposeful actions of individual souls. They are observed as consisting of elements and they are activated by effort which is a special quality of individual souls . Similar is the case of the bodies of individual souls. Therefore these also consist of elements, since these are the cause of happiness and sorrow like a pot. These are also products like a cart and so on since they can be known through external sense organs and since they have colour and so on just like a pot.
- 40 N.V.,IV.1.2.1.

- ⁴¹ Under the discussion Udayana turns his attention to another basic objection of the Buddhists; there is no invariable concomitance of 'having-an-agent' with being-an-effect'. He summarizes; the objection of the Buddhists who first of all try to disprove the nature of invariable concomitance of 'having-an-agent' in 'being-an-effect' , as understood by the Naiyāyikas and then conclude that it is not possible to establish the existence of God. The Buddhist states that although a hundred times one has seen the reason and sādhyā in Sapakṣa and their absence in Vipakṣa, it cannot at all be sure that in all instances there would be such agreement. There is no certainty that there is no deviation. Hence there should be some means of cognizing the invariable concomitance of 'having-an-agent' in 'being-an-agent' other than the non-perception of deviation. Such means, according to the Naiyāyikas can only be the following: absence of additional condition (upādhi), the relation . And so there will be no doubt about deviation and consequently no doubt about additional condition either.
- ⁴² N.V.T.T.,IV.1.21; pp.419-20.
- ⁴³ NKS., I.8.
विफला विश्ववृत्तिर्नो न दुखैकफलापि वा दृष्टलाभफला नाऽपि विप्रलम्भोऽपि नेदृशः ।
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.,V.1
कार्यायोजनघृत्यादेः पदात् प्रत्ययतः श्रुतेः ।
वाक्यात् संख्याविशेषाच्च साध्यो विश्वजिदव्ययः ।
- ⁴⁵ TCI.,p.5-10
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.,54-55
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ NM.,p.12
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.,p.194
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.,p. 202
- ⁵¹ Ibid.,p. 240
- ⁵² T.Bh., p.53
- ⁵³ Ibid
- ⁵⁴ N.S.M.
चूडामणीकृत विधुर्वलयीकृतवासुकि भवो भवतु भव्याय लीलाताण्डव पण्डितः ।
- ⁵⁵ N.Bh.,4.1.21
गुणविशिष्टमात्मान्तरमीश्वरः तस्यात्मकल्यात् कल्पान्तरानुपपत्तिः अधर्ममिथ्याज्ञानप्रमादहान्या
धर्मज्ञान-समाधिसम्पदा च विशिष्टमात्मान्तरमाद्यष्टविधमैश्वर्यम् । सङ्कल्पानुबिधायी चास्य धर्मः ।
- ⁵⁶ Y.S.,I.25.
- ⁵⁷ Pr.Bh.,p.277
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.,p.277
- ⁵⁹ Ibid.,p.621
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.,p.277
- ⁶¹ Ibid.,p.273
- ⁶² N.V.,p.464
तद्वस्वभावानवधारणात्सन्देः ईश्वरः किं द्रव्यमाहो गुणादीनं अन्यतम् इति ।
- ⁶³ VS.,1.1.4
साधर्म्यवैधर्म्याभ्यां निश्रेयसाधिगमः ।
- ⁶⁴ N.V.,p.464
- ⁶⁵ Ibid
अतिशयस्तु बुद्धिनित्यत्वं गुणभेदः ।
- ⁶⁶ Ibid.,p.465
नित्यं विज्ञानं ईश्वरस्य इति न तत्र संस्कार विद्यते ।

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- 67 NM.,p.185
68 NS.,p.97
69 NM.,p.185.
70 N.V. ,p.535
71 Ibid.,p.465
तदभ्युपगमे च तत्तन्त्रत्वात् ईश्वरो नैश्वरःस्यात् ।
72 Pr.Bh.,p.471
73 N.V.T.T.,p.591
न पुनर्न अक्षं आश्रितानित्यत्वात् ।
74 N.V.p.466
इच्छा तु विद्यते अक्लिष्टाव्याहतसर्वार्थेषु यथा बुद्धिः ।
75 Ibid.,p.463
प्रवृत्तिः स्वाभाविकं तत् तत्त्वम् ।
76 N.V.T.T., p.604
ज्ञानचिकीर्षाप्रयत्नसमवायलक्षणत्वात् अन्यत्रसिद्धौ इतरयोः सिद्धेः ।
77 YSBh., IV.p.464.
78 N.V., p.466
आत्मेश्वरसम्बन्धो स्थित्येतदेव शक्यते वक्तुम् ।
79 N.V.T.T., p.597
नित्याभ्यामेव ज्ञानक्रियाशक्तिभ्यां सकलकार्योत्पादसिद्धेः ।
80 Ibid.
तस्य हि ज्ञानक्रियाशक्तिनित्येति नित्यम् ।

CHAPTER III

THEISM IN VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA

Rāmānujācārya, the eleventh century South Indian philosopher, is the chief advocate of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy. He offers a systematic theistic interpretation of the philosophy of the *Vedas*. He presents the epistemic and soteriological implications of *bhakti* or devotion to a Personal God. In his philosophical treatises especially in *BSRB* and *VSa*. Rāmānuja defended the reality of a plurality of individual souls, qualities, values and objects while establishing the substantial unity of all. Rāmānuja's philosophy is described as *Viśiṣṭādvaita* for it combines Advaita (oneness of God) with *Viśeṣa* (attributes).

3.1 Historical Background of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*

Traced back to its historical roots, theism in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* as it is developed by Rāmānuja is to be found in its earlier forms among those sects who emphasize *bhakti*, or devotional faith. The word *bhakti* is derived from the root *bhaj*. The oldest meaning of this word is to participate. But in the context of Rāmānuja's philosophy it means to adore the Lord.

Generally speaking *Vaiṣṇavite* history provides material for the study of Indian theism related with Rāmānuja's philosophy. *Viṣṇu* is the deity of *Vaiṣṇavite* sect. He is an old *Vedic* god. In the *R̥gveda* he is a minor god, a partner of Indra,

known for expertise as a fighter¹. This deity was later combined with the concept of Nārāyaṇa. Much like *Puruṣa* of *Ṛgveda*, Nārāyaṇa was a supreme being. *Puruṣa* was the primeval cosmic person whose sacrifice was used to explain the origin of the world. Nārāyaṇa too was a supreme being who through sacrifice became the world. In the *Vaiṣṇavite* theism the conceptions of *Viṣṇu* and Nārāyaṇa were connected to form an important element of the notion of the divine.

A parallel *Vaiṣṇavite* history of theism can also be sketched out in the development of the notion of theism in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy along with the combined conception of the divine notions of *Viṣṇu* and *Nārāyaṇa*. There the monotheistic creed developed around the deity *Vāsudeva*, the adorable. Hirianna says that, “its essential features were belief in a single personal God, Vāsudeva, and in salvation as resulting from an unswerving devotion to him. Briefly, we may say that it resembles the Hebraic type of godhead.”² Here one sees the enhanced convention of the term *Īśvara* (lord) for God rather than the *Vedic* term *deva* (god). It suggests the unique formation of the notion of deity that was evolving in the line of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy. In a general sense it is the *Bhāgavata* religion. For

Bhāgavatas the relation between the soul and the lord was the ultimate truth. The quest for an absolute unity within the Vedic tradition was incompatible with this view.

Later, one sees the merge of the devotional theism of the *Bhāgavata* religion with *Sāṅkhya* philosophy. At that time *Sāṅkhya* philosophy was most likely no more than a dualistic world vision based on the principles of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (matter and spirit). The *Yoga* system which complemented this basic world view elaborated a technique for the realization of the self (*Puruṣa*) as independent of *Prakṛti*. The association of the *Bhāgavata* tradition with *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* thought resulted in the former's adopting of the name *Puruṣa* for Vāsudeva, the lord. It opened the way for the later identification of Vāsudeva with Nārāyaṇa, who was conceptually related to *Puruṣa*, the original male.

In the next stage of theism related with *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy one sees the combining of God or *Īśvara* to the impersonal One of the *Upaniṣādic* tradition. The result of this union is twofold. There is an identification of Vāsudeva with the old *Vedic* god *Viṣṇu* and the reconciliation of the *Bhagavat* monotheism with its *bhakti*-oriented form of worship and ethic

with the central concepts of *Brāhmaṇic* and *Upaniṣādic* ethics *karma* and *jñāna*.

Thus the identification of *Vāsudeva* with *Nārāyaṇa* and *Viṣṇu* was completed. But it is clear that in the route of history due to historical reasons *Bhāgavata* theism became increasingly dominated by *Upaniṣādic* monism. During this period, under the influence of the very old Vedic conception of deity produced by the process of arrested anthropomorphism, the *Bhāgavatas* were led to simply identify their lord *Vāsudeva* with the cosmic conception of *Brahman*. This union is the artificial result of the compromise between *Bhāgavata* theism and *Upaniṣādic* monism. When Śaṅkara came in the early part of the ninth century this was the religious background for developing his philosophy of *Advaita*.

Śaṅkara thoroughly undercuts the past theistic tradition. He began by distinguishing two levels of knowledge.³ He then used these to reconcile the obvious tensions between the two conceptions of *Brahman* and the idea of a personal God. *Brahman* conceived cosmically as God is aspects of reality from the perspective of common life. Knowledge of them is *avidyā*. It is true in terms of the phenomenal world. *Vidyā* however, is a

higher knowledge. It is the knowledge of the mystic. From this perspective, all reality is *Brahman*, a cosmically conceived. It is the consciousness of the transcendental subject. There is complete unity here. *Brahman* is entirely devoid of qualities, parts, or distinctions. There is no world, no God, no individual. There is only *Brahman*, and *Brahman* is *Ātman*.

In spite of Śaṅkara's genuine interest in devotionism and the *bhakti* movements as important for life in the realm of *avidyā*, the implications of his thought soon became clear. Many of the theistic groups especially the *Vaiṣṇavites* realized that Śaṅkara's distinctions between ontological and epistemological levels did not really alter the effect of his monistic position. This was so because it was precisely at the level of the real that they, the *bhaktas*, affirmed the absolute importance of the God-man relation. Therefore they could not accept unity at that level, whatever concessions might be made on other levels. The result was a reaction against Śaṅkara and monistic thought in general.

The philosophic reaction against the rise of Śaṅkara's *Advaita Vedāntic* thought was manifested itself in a renewed interest in *Sāṅkhya* philosophy and in a movement of renewed interpretations of *Upaniṣādic* monism. Its culmination came in

the eleventh century with the thought of Rāmānuja. He attempted a detailed refutation of much of Śaṅkara's thought and then went on to provide the final context for modern Indian theism. First, he implicitly rejected the a cosmic description of *Brahman*⁴ This was done by expanding the cosmic notion so as to include consciousness. Being itself or the cosmic notion was interpreted somewhat idealistically in terms of consciousness. Having done this, Rāmānuja could then argue that *Upaniṣādic* passages referring to the a cosmic conception (as the transcendent conscious subject) really referred to the cosmic notion with the intention of emphasizing its conscious character⁵ . Passages referring to the a cosmic conception as absolute unity were said to refer to *Brahman* conceived cosmically, but in the unmanifest state. This form of the cosmic conception was then related to God through the use of a body-soul metaphor and a unique substance-accident theory. *Brahman* and *Īśvara* were said to be related inseparably as are substance and attribute, the latter being the necessary expression of the former. These points will be elaborated in the following section of the thesis. Before considering the theistic conception of Rāmānuja it is important to point out the objections he raises against Śaṅkara's interpretation of reality.

3.2 The Seven Objections to Śaṅkara's *Advaita* Posed by Rāmānuja

Rāmānuja picks out what he sees as seven fundamental flaws in the *Advaita* philosophy in order to revise them. He argues and proposes the following objections against Śaṅkara's *Advaita* position. The first argument is based on the nature of *Avidyā*. He states that *Avidyā* must be either real or unreal; there is no other possibility. But neither of these is possible. If *Avidyā* is real, non-dualism collapses into dualism. If it is unreal, we are driven to self-contradiction or infinite regress. Then he poses the problem of the incomprehensibility of *Avidyā*. *Advaitins* claim that *Avidyā* is neither real nor unreal. But it is incomprehensible, (*anirvacanīya*) All cognition is either of the real or of the unreal: the *Advaitins* claim flies in the face of experience and the acceptance of it would call into question all cognitions and render it unsafe. The third position is based on the grounds of knowledge of *Avidyā*. No *pramāṇa* can establish *Avidyā* in the sense the *Advaitin* requires. *Advaita* philosophy presents *Avidyā* not as a mere lack of knowledge, as something purely negative, but as an obscuring layer which covers *Brahman* and is removed by true *Brahma-vidyā*. *Avidyā* is positive nescience and not mere

ignorance. Rāmānuja argues that positive nescience is established neither by perception, nor by inference, nor by scriptural testimony. On the contrary, Rāmānuja argues, all cognitions are of the real. Then he concentrates on the locus of *Avidyā*. Where is the *Avidyā* that gives rise to the (false) impression of the reality of the perceived world? There are two possibilities; it could be *Brahman's Avidyā* or the individual soul's (*jīva*). Neither is possible. *Brahman* is knowledge; *Avidyā* cannot co-exist as an attribute with a nature utterly incompatible with it. Nor can the individual soul be the locus of *Avidyā*: the existence of the individual soul is due to *Avidyā*; this would lead to a vicious circle. After this Rāmānuja presents the *Avidyā*'s obscuration of the nature of *Brahman*. Śaṅkara would have made us believe that the true nature of *Brahman* is somehow covered-over or obscured by *Avidyā*. Rāmānuja regards this as an absurdity: given that *Advaita* claims that *Brahman* is pure self-luminous consciousness, obscuration must mean either preventing the origination of this (impossible since *Brahman* is eternal) or the destruction of it equally absurd. Then he examines the *advaitic* position of the removal of *Avidyā* by *Brahma-vidyā*. *Advaita* claims that *Avidyā* has no beginning, but it is terminated and removed by *Brahma-vidyā*, the intuition of the reality of

Brahman as pure, undifferentiated consciousness. But Rāmānuja denies the existence of undifferentiated (*nirguṇa*) *Brahman*, arguing that whatever exists has attributes: *Brahman* has infinite auspicious attributes. Liberation is a matter of Divine Grace: no amount of learning or wisdom will deliver it to us. Finally he argues against the position of the removal of *Avidyā*. For the *Advaitin*, the bondage in which we dwell before the attainment of *Mokṣa* is caused by *Māya* or *Avidyā*, knowledge of reality (*Brahma-vidyā*) releases us. Rāmānuja, however, asserts that bondage is real. No kind of knowledge can remove what is real. On the contrary, knowledge discloses the real; it does not destroy it. And what exactly is the knowledge that delivers *mokṣa* is saving us from bondage (if it is real then non-duality collapses into duality; if it is unreal, then we face an utter absurdity. Based on these arguments Rāmānuja develops his theistic conception).

Rāmānuja's philosophy of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* (qualified non-dualism) accepts the truth stated in the Vedas that the Supreme Person is transcendent, an abstract unity, and the substance that underlies all material reality. To synthesize this basic belief with the concept of an equally authoritative Personal Lord he qualifies his belief. The qualification is as follows: if the Supreme Person is the substance of all material reality, then it is

logically consistent for Him to take material form and function as a Personal Lord. This view becomes known as qualified non-dualism, and it allows the devotee to liberation directly through contemplation or as the result of intense devotion (*bhakti*). This argument for the validity of devotion as a path to the ultimate realization of the Supreme Person is one of Rāmānuja's most potent contributions to the development of theism of South Asia.

3.3 Development of Theism in *Viśiṣṭādvaita*:

A Historical Sketch

The following section of this thesis tries to briefly describe the developments or the shift of emphasis occurs in the Theism of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* in the light of Rāmānuja's interpretations of it.

Viṣṇu as Supreme Being. The *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy based on the teachings contained in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Āgamās*, the *Itihāsas*, the *Vaiṣṇava Purāṇās* and the hymns of the *Ālavārs* turned to become the *Vaiṣṇava* religion has formulated certain important and distinctive theological doctrines. A historical sketch of this doctrinal is drawn in the following section of this study.

Viṣṇu is the Supreme Being (*paratattva*) which constitutes the central theme of *Vaiṣṇavism*. The nature of the ultimate Reality is enunciated in the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* which represents the philosophic view of *Īśvara* or God. *Brahman*, the term commonly used to designate the ultimate Reality, is the primary cause of the universe. It is defined by the *Upaniṣad* as *satyam* or Reality, *Jñānam* or knowledge and *anantam* or infinite. It is also blissful in character and free from all defects. It is endowed with numerous attributes of unsurpassable excellence. The *Vedānta-Sūtra* which is primarily concerned with the discussion of the criteria of Reality does not identify it with any particular deity of religion. This identification of the ultimate reality of *Vedānta* with a deity is very essential for *Vaiṣṇava* religion for the purpose of worship and mediation. This is the task which has been accomplished by later *Vaiṣṇava* theology by equating *Brahman* with *Viṣṇu*.

Identity of Viṣṇu with Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Brahman.
According to *Vaiṣṇavism*, *Viṣṇu* is the Supreme Deity (*paradevatā*) as revealed in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Āgamās* and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*. The same is known by the name of *Nārāyaṇa* in the *Upaniṣads*, as *Vāsudeva* in the *Pañcarātra Āgamās* and as *Viṣṇu* in the *Itihāsas* and

Puraṇās. *Viṣṇu*, *Vāsudeva* and *Nārāyaṇa* are the three names which are generally used in the *Vaiṣṇava* literature to designate *Īśvara* or god. Etymologically speaking all these names bear the same meaning. Taking the root verb *viṣṭ* which means pervasiveness, the term *Viṣṇu* is defined as one who is *Viṣṭ* (pervasion). It first indicates as one who pervades space time and all entities. Secondly, on the basis of the root verb *viś* meaning to enter (*viś praveśane*), it explains that *Viṣṇu* is regarded as Supreme Being because He enters into all sentient as well as non-sentient entities, the greatest as well as the smallest, emphasizing the immanent character of the Reality⁶. Thirdly, *Viṣṇu* is so-called because He possesses all the great attributes such as knowledge, power etc., Fourthly, He is Supreme Being because He is always desired by all the souls⁷. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, the oldest and most authoritative *Purāṇa* for determining the nature of *tattvas*, points out at the very outset that the entire universe is originated, sustained and dissolved by *Viṣṇu*, reiterating the definition offered for *Brahman* by the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the *Vedānta sūtra*⁸.

The term *Vāsudeva* (derived from the root verb *vas* meaning to reside) is interpreted by the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* as one who abides everywhere and who is also the source of everything⁹,

emphasizing the all pervasive character of the Reality, as stated in the *Tn.Up.*¹⁰ The suffix ‘*deva*’ add to *Vāsu* implies that He shines forth (*dīvyati*) untouched by any defects, though He abides in everything, It also signifies that He enjoys himself with the creation of the universe which is a sport to Him and that the celestial beings (*devās*) sing His glory¹¹.

The word *Nārāyaṇa*, which is a far more comprehensive term implying all the characteristics of the ultimate reality bears the same etymological meaning as that of *Viṣṇu* and *Vāsudeva*. This compound word is interpreted in two ways on the basis of etymology. *Nārās* stand for sentient and non-sentient beings (*narasaṁbandhino nārāḥ*) and *nara* means the Supreme Being (*Puruṣōttama*) *Ayana* means one who is the ground of all sentient and non-sentient entities in the universe (*nārāḥāṁ ayanam*). It can also mean one who is immanent in all (*nārāḥ ayanam yasya saḥ*)¹². The term thus signifies all the important characteristics of *Brahman* of the *Upaniṣad*, viz., that *Nārāyaṇa* is the ground and primary cause of the universe, that He is all pervasive and immanent in all.

The term *Brahman* also means etymologically (taking the root verb *br̥h*) the one which grows and causes to grow¹³. It

implies that which is infinite (*ananta*) in respect of its *svarūpa* and also its attributes is *Brahman*.

Bhagavān is another term which is used more often in the *Pañcarātra* treatises to denote *Brahman*. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* states explicitly that the term refers to *Vāsudeva* who is the *Para-Brahma*¹⁴. It also points out that *Bhagavān* means the Supreme Being who is endowed with the six attributes, viz., knowledge, power, strength, lordship, virility and splendor, and who is also free from all defects¹⁵.

Thus all these terms *Viṣṇu*, *Nārāyaṇa*, *Vāsudeva*, *Bhagavān*, *Brahman* bear the same import and denote the same one ultimate Reality referred to in the *Upaniṣads*. Keeping this truth in mind, Rāmānuja states that the term *Brahman* denotes *Puruṣottama*, the Supreme Personal Being who is identified with the name *Nārāyaṇa*, on the authority of the *Upaniṣads*. The same *Nārāyaṇa* is known by the name of *Viṣṇu* in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, as Hari in the *Harivaṃśa*, as *Rāma* in *Rāmāyaṇa* as *Vāsudeva* in the *Bhagavadgīta*, as *Kṛṣṇa* in the *Bhāgavata purāṇa* etc., indicating the different manifestations of *Viṣṇu*.

Since *Brahman* is identical with the Personal God of *Vaiṣṇava* religion, all that has been stated about *Brahman* will

equally apply to *Viṣṇu*. *Vaiṣṇavism* has formulated a few additional theological theories related to the doctrine of God. These are - *Viṣṇu* is the Supreme Deity over and above *Rudra* and *Brahma*, *Viṣṇu* is *Śriyaḥpati*, that is, He is inseparably associated with Goddess *Śrī*, *Viṣṇu* is endowed with infinite attributes and a spiritual body (*vigraha*), *Viṣṇu* manifests Himself in different forms (*avatāra*), and *Viṣṇu* is the means (*Upāya*) and goal to be attained (*Upeya*)

Viṣṇu as Paradevata : *Viṣṇu*, *Brahma* and *Rudra* are the popular concept of trinity. Historically speaking, right from the Vedic period, it is an established fact that *Viṣṇu* is the highest deity. We can see how the hymns of *Ṛgveda* speak of the Supremacy of *Viṣṇu*. Though the *Ṛgveda* refers to numerous different deities including *Rudra* and *Brahma*, it acknowledges the existence of one sole Reality in the name of *Sat*, *Ekam* etc. We can explain on the authority of *Puruṣa-Sūkta* that the one Reality describes as *Puruṣa* in this passage denotes *Viṣṇu dī Nārāyaṇa*, as is evident in the *Upaniṣads* and the *Śathapatha Brāhmaṇa*. This truth is reiterated more explicitly in the *Āgamās* and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* as well as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* including the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the minds of the ancient sages, there was absolutely no doubt regarding the Supremacy of

Viṣṇu. All the *Vedic* commentators have acknowledged this fact. Even in the post-*Vedic* period right up to A.D 800 this fact was not questioned seriously by anyone. This is evident from the fact that Śaṅkara born in A.D 788 who was an outstanding *Vedāntin* and who is also claimed by the *Advaitins* to have upheld the supremacy of *Viṣṇu* in all his writings. In his commentaries on the *Upaniṣads*, the *Vedānta-sūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, he has frequently referred to *Viṣṇu*, *Nārāyaṇa* and *Vāsudeva* as the Supreme personal God¹⁶. The *Saguṇa Brahman* in the *Advaita Vedānta* is *Viṣṇu* or *Nārāyaṇa*. Thus, right from the ancient time up to A.D. 800 there does not seem to have been any serious dispute regarding the supremacy of *Viṣṇu*. *Śaivism*, which is also one of the oldest religions and which upholds *Śiva* as the Supreme Being, existed along with *Vaiṣṇavism*. But there was no rivalry between the two religions.

Probably due to the fact that the worshippers of *Śiva* in the earlier centuries did not question that *Viṣṇu* is the highest God. It was at a later period, sometime after 8th century, that rivalry appears to have started between the two religions¹⁷. With the royal patronage, this was aggravated by building big temples for either *Śiva* or *Viṣṇu* and by writing works to prove the relative superiority of each cult. It reached a climax in the 16th century

when Appayya Deekṣita¹⁸ (1552-1624), a follower of Śaṅkara School of *Vedānta*, wrote a book under the name of *Śivārkamaṇidīpika* as a commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras* in favour of *Śiva* as the ultimate Reality. Books have been written in the last few centuries disputing, the claims of *Vaiṣṇavas* and *Śaivites*. Against this historical background, it became necessary for the *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas*, such as *Ālvandār*, Rāmānuja and particularly those who came in the post-Rāmānuja period to defend the Supremacy of *Viṣṇu* with elaborate arguments supported with scriptural and *Śmṛti* texts.

According to the teaching of *Vedānta*, *Īśvara* or God, who is the saviour of mankind and who is the bestower of *Mokṣa*, is to be mediated upon for salvation. One should have a clear conception of who is that *Īśvara* before one embarks on meditation. Meditation is not possible on an impersonal Being or an absolutely undifferentiated Being. The object of meditation should be such as the mind is able to concentrate on it. In the background of the above explanation we can describe Rāmānuja's Philosophy of Theism.

3.4 Rāmānuja's Exposition of *Brahman*

In contrast to preceding commentators on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, Rāmānuja's version of *Vedānta* is explicitly theistic. *Brahman* as *Ātman* (the Highest Self of all) is the union of two deities: *Viṣṇu*, or *Nārāyaṇa*, and His Consort *Śrī*, or *Lakṣmi*. (In Hinduism, *Viṣṇu* is the God who upholds and preserves all things, while *Lakṣmi* is the Goddess of prosperity.) The unity of both the father (*Viṣṇu*) and mother (*Lakṣmi*) element in *Brahman* is essential to Rāmānuja. It is a consequence of the view that *Brahman* is *ubhayaliṅgam*, or having both sexes: this account for *Brahman's* creative potency. According to Rāmānuja, *Brahman* (considered as the *Ātman*) is antagonistic to all evil lacks all faults (*pāpam*, *heya*, *mala* or *doṣa*), and is comprised of innumerable auspicious qualities (*kalyāṇaguṇaḥ*) these auspicious qualities are both moral and aesthetic¹⁹ Rāmānuja never tires of speaking of God's excellences. The highest Self (*Ātma*) stands to all other persons as their parent, on Rāmānuja's account. *Brahman* does not create individual persons, or basic, non-relational qualities for that matter, for these are eternal features of its Body. *Brahman* does engage in a form of creation, which consists in granting individual persons the fruits of their actions. The result of this dispensation is the organization of the elements comprising *Brahman's* body into the cosmos.²⁰

Kāraṇa Brahman* and *Kārya Brahman : According to Rāmānuja, Supreme *Brahman* is the world-soul. Unconscious matter and conscious souls in all states constitute his body²¹. *Brahman* is the cause. The entire unconscious world and conscious souls are effect. In Rāmānuja's view the effect is non-different from the cause. Matter and souls are not separate entities with reference to *Brahman*. They are the attributes of *Brahman*. They co- inhere in *Brahman* as inseparable and non-different *Viśeṣaṇās* (attributes). Before elaborating these points of Rāmānuja with reference to *Brahman* it is helpful to make a hasty survey of the point of Śaṅkara's interpretation of the notion of impartite with reference to the explication of the meaning of *Brahman*.

The aforementioned position of Rāmānuja is a different interpretation of the claim of Ch.Up about *Brahman* from that of Śaṅkara's interpretation of the same. Śaṅkara and most of his followers interpret *Upaniṣādic* text of Chāndyogya to explain *Brahman* as the reality devoid of all characteristics (*Nirguṇa Brahman*). (Sanskrit-*sādeva saumya* etc). Śaṅkara's explanation goes as follows: "In the beginning, my dear, this (the world) was Being alone, only one without a second"²². The implication of the word *sādeva* is that the manifested universe of name and

form was pure being (sat) prior to creation. The word *ekam-eva* entails that there was no second, that is, there was no other object than being. Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Upaniṣādic* text does not entail *sajātīyabheda*, *svagathabheda* and *vijātīyabheda*. *Sajātīyabheda* is the difference of an object from another similar object and also the internal difference in the form of any characteristic as, for e.g. a tree is unlike from another similar tree. *Svagathabheda* indicates the internal difference having in the same object, e.g. internal difference in a tree such as its leaves, flowers and fruits. *Vijātīyabheda* speaks of the difference of an object from that of another object of a different kind, for e.g. the difference of a tree from a rock.

By rejecting *sajātīyabheda*, *svagathabheda* and *vijātīyabheda* in *Brahman*, Śaṅkara conveys the idea of the non-relational impartite²³ unitary character of *Brahman*. This is the *akhaṇḍārtha* of *Brahman*. He substantiates it as the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of *Brahman*. This is against the stand point of the Sūtrakāra who deems the *akhaṇḍārtha* of *Brahman* as *tatasthalakṣaṇa*. According to Śaṅkara *Brahman* is the absolute being. It is the undifferentiated unity. It is from the standpoint of true existence that Śaṅkara presents *Brahman* as impartite and solitary. From

the view point of partial existence *Brahman* is appropriated to countless internal difference.

In contrast to the position of Śaṅkara, in Rāmānuja's view *Brahman* is not a non- relational and non-differentiated bare being. To him *Brahman* is living reality and relational whole. *Brahman* is inseparably related with the order of individual self (*cit*) and of matter (*acit*). The notion of inseparable relation between substance and attributes (*apṛtak-siddhibhāva*)²⁴ is fundamental to understand Rāmānuja's metaphysics. The word *prthak* means separable. *Apṛthak* implies the sense of inseparableness. Rāmānuja's system explains the notion of *siddhi* in the following way: *Sthiti* implies that an attribute can not exist without the support of substance. In the same way the notion of *pratīti* indicates that no attribute can be perceived except as related to substance.

According to Rāmānuja *Brahman* possesses an internal difference (*svagatha bheda*) since it is internally related with the objective world (*acit-prapañca*) and the subjective world (*cit-prapañca*). Rāmānuja calls this relation between the *Brahman* and *acit-prapañca* on the one hand and the relation between the *Brahman* and *cit-prapañca* on the other by the name *apṛtak-*

siddhibhāva. Rāmānuja makes use of this notion in his philosophy to indicate the relation between the substance and attributes as in the sense of the rapport between the body and the soul.

Rāmānuja holds that *cit* and *acit* form the body of *Brahman* in the causal state as well as in the effected state²⁵. According to him *Paramātmān* is the soul of the individual souls and *acit* entity. Individual souls and the objective world form the body of *Paramātmān*. *Cit* and *acit* exist in *Paramātmān* inherently. It is their inner controller both in causal state and effected state. Rāmānuja names the relation between *Cit*, *acit* and *Brahman* ‘*śarīrāśarīribhāvasambandha*’ i.e., the relation “that of body and soul”. He explains the notion of *śarīr* in the following way: “अतो यस्य चेतनस्य यदद्रव्यं सर्वात्मना स्वार्थे नियन्तुं धारयितुं च शक्यं तच्छेषतैकस्वरूपञ्च तत्तस्य शरीरमिति शरीरलक्षणमास्थेयम् ।”²⁶. Accordingly *cit* and *acit* are borne by *Brahman* for its own purpose and are related to *Brahman* in the sense of ‘*śeṣaśeṣībhāva sambandha*’.²⁷ So these form the body of *Paramātmān*. *Cit* and *acit* maintain the ‘*prakaraprakari-bhāvasambadha*’²⁸ with *Brahman*.

Cit and *acit* sustain *samānadhikarānya* ²⁹ between themselves. Being *viśeṣaṇas* or modes of *Brahman* *cit* and *acit* are called parts of *Brahman*. As *viśeṣaṇas* *cit* and *acit* are different and non- different from *Brahman*. At the same time Rāmānuja is very particular to state that three notions involved in the exposition of the philosophy of *Brahman*, *Paramātmān*, *cit* and *acit*, form one composite unity namely *Brahman*. *Paramātmān*, *cit* and *acit* are not separate entities. Rāmānuja calls his exposition of *Brahman* ‘*Viśiṣṭādvaita*’ philosophy in order to highlight the relation that is maintained between *Paramātmān*, *cit* and *acit* that form one composite unity namely *Brahman* ³⁰. The relation of *cit* and *acit* with *Paramātmān* is instantaneously different and non-different. Rāmānuja emphasizes this notion of complex relation time and again in his philosophy. As the faults of body do not touch the soul, so the *guṇa* and *doṣa* of *cit* and *acit* i.e. the body of *Paramātmān*, do not soil *Brahman* ³¹. *Brahman* is beyond all kinds of modifications that affect only *cit* and *acit*.

Later *Viśiṣṭādvaita* scholars had studied in detail the status of *cit* and *acit* with reference to *Paramātmān*. The individual soul was presented as *amśa* of supreme soul. *Amśa* or part is not that entity that is separated from *Brahman*.

Śrīnivāsācārya explains *amśa* as the *śakthi* or power of *Brahman*. “अंशो हि शक्तिरूपो ग्राह्यः”³². His account of *śakthi* goes as follows: if individual soul (*jīva*) be taken as real part of *Brahman* it is to be deemed as different from *Brahman*. But individual self is simultaneously different and non- different from *Brahman*. The relation of individual self with *Brahman* is like the relation between the power and the powerful. The power is the part of the powerful. At the same time it is different from the powerful³³. It is also true with regard to the status of *acit*. According to Rāmānuja *acit* in its causal state, in the subtle form and in the effected state, in the gross form constitute the body of *Paramātmān*. Śrīnivāsācārya exposes *acit* as the transformation of *Brahman*’s power and it holds the relation with *Paramātmān* both in the modes of *bheda* and *abheda*³⁴.

The aforesaid picture of *Brahman* is the whole reality in Rāmānuja’s philosophy. According to him *Brahman* in the causal and effected condition with his body of conscious souls and unconscious matter is the entire truth. *Brahman* is one in the non-manifested or undifferentiated condition. He is manifold in the manifested or differentiated condition. Subtle unconscious matter non- manifested in names and forms and subtle conscious

souls are the body of Causal *Brahman*. Gross unconscious matter manifested in names and forms or objects and individual souls with their manifested qualities constitute the body of the Effected *Brahman*³⁵.

According to Rāmānuja, every effect involves a material cause. The world as effect implies free existing souls and non-evolved matter. Though souls and matter are the modes of God, they have enjoyed the kind of individual existence which is theirs from all eternity. Their existence cannot be entirely resolved into *Brahman*. They have a sort of secondary subsistence which is enough to enable them to develop on their own lines. They exist in two different conditions which periodically alternate. The first is a subtle state where they do not possess the qualities by which they are ordinarily known. In this state there is no distinction of individual name and form. Here the matter is non-evolved (*avyaktha*) and intelligence is contracted (*saṅkucita*). This is the state of *pralaya* when *Brahman* is said to be in the causal condition (*Kāraṇāvastha*). When creation takes place on account of the will of the Lord, subtle matter becomes gross and souls enter into connection with the material bodies corresponding to the degree of merit or demerit acquired by them in previous forms of existence and their intelligence undergoes a certain field

of expansion (*vikāsa*). *Brahman* in the manifested form with souls and matter is said to be in the effect condition (*Kāryāvastha*).

Material and Efficient Cause of the Universe : As the philosophy of personal God (Supreme Being) who is one but characterized by certain attributes, in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy Rāmānuja states what he understands by the notion of *Brahman*.³⁶

By the word *Brahman* is denoted the Highest *Puruṣa* or *Puruṣottama* in whom all the blemishes are by nature expelled, and who is possessed of a host of auspicious qualities, unlimited, unsurpassed and innumerable. Every where the word *Brahman* is understood the being associated with the quality magnitude. Where there is unlimited excess in respect of nature as well as qualities, which is its primary sense. That, further, is definitely the Lord of all³⁷.

Rāmānuja establishes the ultimate reality, *Brahman* as *Saguṇa* in harmony with the *Nirguṇa* sentences of *Śruthis*. They refer to *Brahman* as *Nirguṇa*, *Nirañjana*, *Niścala*, *Śānta* etc. These sentences of *Śruthis* state that *Brahman* is bereft of common properties that are to be rejected.³⁸ According to Rāmānuja, *jñātṛtva* and other *guṇas* are the auspicious and

natural properties of *Brahman* while evil properties are to be rejected. In the same way the following statements of *Śruthis* are interpreted by Rāmānuja in peculiar ways to support the notion of *saguṇa Brahman*.

“एकमेवद्वितीयम् इति”³⁹, “जगदुपादानस्य ब्रह्मणः स्वव्यतिरिक्ताधिष्ठात्रन्तरनिवारणेन विचित्रशक्तियोगप्रतिपादनपरत्वात् अद्वितीयम्।”⁴⁰ In accordance with the interpretation of Rāmānuja, *Advithīya*, one without a second is meant for propounding the association with multiform powers, by setting aside the possibility of a governing entity other than itself. Here *Brahman* is interpreted as the material cause of the world. In the same manner in the saying of *Śruthi* “सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्मा”⁴¹ ... “इत्यनेन सविशेषमेव प्रतिपाद्यते “न च निर्गुणवाक्यविरोधः, प्रकृतहेयगुण विषयत्वात् तेषाम् ।”⁴² ... “निर्गुणनिरञ्जनं निष्फलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं⁴³ इत्यादीनाम्।” The explication of the passage ‘truth, knowledge and infinite are *Brahman*’ propounds the meaning of *Brahman* with distinctive attributes⁴⁴. Neither is thus in contradiction with the passage describing *Brahman* as devoid of qualities, on account of their referring to the qualities that are to be removed due to their belonging to *Prakṛti*. In the *Śruthi* passage “ज्ञानमात्रस्वरूपवीदिन्योऽपि श्रुतयो ज्ञानस्वरूपत्वात्यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित्”⁴⁵ *jñāna* is presented as the nature of *Brahman*. According

to Rāmānuja this does not indicate the reality of *Brahman* as merely distinction-less and pure consciousness. The knower himself is of the nature of knowledge. In Rāmānuja's view all the *Śruthi* passages speak about the nature of *Brahman* as one who possesses the quality of knowing. The following passages support the claim of Rāmānuja about the nature of *Brahman*.
“नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।”⁴⁶ “न तस्य कार्यं करणं च विद्यते न तत्समश्चाभ्यधिकश्च दृश्यते ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ।”⁴⁷
These and other *Śruthi* passages speak of the auspicious qualities of *Brahman* as knower. Knowledge as natural quality being foremost in *Brahman* as the knower has got the nature of knowledge alone.

Rāmānuja states that *Śruthi* itself discriminates the purport of the passages explaining *Brahman* with and without qualities. It rejects the qualities that are to be abandoned. The passages beginning with ‘with the sins removed’ and ending with ‘without thirst’ are the qualities to be abandoned. *Śruthi* describes auspiciousness of *Brahman* in passages contained the phrases like ‘with desires fulfilled’, ‘with thoughts fulfilled’ etc. In Rāmānuja's view as there is no contradiction between the passages dealing with the qualified and the quality-less *Brahman*,

the acceptance of either as being the resort of a false object is not to be considered.

Rāmānuja is continually responding to the Advaitin's assertion that the Supreme Person as pure consciousness alone (*nirguṇa*) is superior to any discussion of Him with qualities (*saguṇa*). This makes the final distinction drawn above important. According to the *Advaitins*, attributes that do not support this abstraction of the Supreme Person are rejected as *neti neti*, not so or false. This is the call to which Rāmānuja replies: Just as we must acknowledge that the essential nature of *Brahman* is illumination (namely consciousness), so that such texts as "True being, knowledge, infinite" is *Brahman*, will not be deprived of their meaning; so likewise (we must admit that) *Brahman* certainly has the dual characteristic; otherwise the texts teaching the qualities of omniscience...etc. and also freedom from such imperfections as ignorance, would lose their meaning⁴⁸. The point for Rāmānuja is that if you assert the infinite and self-conscious nature of *Brahman* based on scripture, you are justified. Numerous scriptural references refer to *Brahman* as both an infinite being beyond all qualities and a self-conscious Personal Lord. If scripture is your source of truth, then

asserting one truth necessitates the recognition of the truth of all other authoritative scriptures as well.

Rāmānuja is committed to *ekam-eva* (one only), a philosophy that there is a fundamental cause of all matter, which is different from specific finite causes. He sees this universal causality as a mark of the Supreme Person's supremacy and thus it is another important key to his theology. In the BSRB⁴⁹ it is explained: That which is called "Being" (*sat*), i.e., the Supreme *Brahman* free from any trace of evil, possessing a host of countless auspicious qualities of matchless excellence together with the power ever to accomplish His will, who is the cause of everything willed thus: "May I be many!" After He had created (or projected, *sr̥ṣṭvā*) the entire universe consisting of the elements of fire, water, etc., He caused the whole mass of individual souls to enter into this universe existing in the form of a magnificent variety (*vicitra*) of material bodies such as those of the gods, etc., each intelligent soul (*jīva*) into a body befitting its own particular karma where it became the self (*ātma*) of that body. Then He Himself, wholly of His own accord (*svecchayaiva*) entered these souls as their Inner Self and thus evolved names and form in these bodies which hitherto were

mere aggregates of matter; i.e., He made each aggregate a particular thing or substantial object (*vastu*) that could be designated with a word or name (*śabda*).⁵⁰

Brahman is a state of Primordial Being and is therefore the material cause of the universe. This Primordial Being is a state where every sort of intelligent and non-intelligent entity as well as the Supreme Being, while still separate, is so tightly compressed that they cannot be differentiated. *Brahman* is the intelligent cause of the universe, because he willed, “May I be many!”, and by this action all variety of material entities come into ordered being. *Brahman* moved and from His infinite reality came forth all the forms in the universe. Rāmānuja accepts the *Saṃkhya* doctrine of *satkāryavāda*, which is the view that the causal substance transforms into a new form but the causal substance is unchanged. While all manner of material forms are created from the causal substance the substance is never effected in anyway by its acts of creation. The key distinction here is that God does not exist as cause and the material world as effect. Rather the Supreme Person in His causal state creates the material realms, and in His effected state the universe is his embodiment. All things in the material

universe constitute the body of the Supreme Person, but the Supreme Person is much more than just these things. In this system finite selves undergo radical change as they are brought out of the undifferentiated state of darkness and into the ordered universe that is projected by the Supreme Person. In the effected state the Supreme Person is unchanged because the universe is the cosmic embodiment of the Him, and finite selves and non-intelligent substance are coeternal with Him.

In his commentary of BSRB⁵¹ he provides what he determines to be the three textual categories for divine nature. First, the Supreme Person is the sole cause of the universe; this shows the importance Rāmānuja places on *Brahman*'s role as material and efficient cause. Second, the Supreme Person's nature is true being, knowledge, infinitude and bliss. Purity (*amalatva*) is not explicitly included in this list, but it is understood as Rāmānuja has established purity as always being included in the first half of the Supreme Person's dual characteristics. Third, Rāmānuja begins by denying that the Supreme Person has any defiling qualities of the material realm, or that He is subject to karma, then he affirms that the Supreme

Person possesses all auspicious qualities and an auspicious bodily form.

3.5 *Brahman* as Personal Lord in Rāmānuja's Philosophy

The word '*Brahman*' is derived from the root verb *brh* 'to grow', the term etymologically means that which grows (*brhati*) and causes to grow (*brhmayati*). This meaning is upheld by the *smṛti* text.⁵² The two significations-*brhatva* and *brhmaṇatva* -which convey the primary significance of the term *Brahman* signify that which possesses infinite greatness both in respect of its intrinsic nature (*svarūpa*) and also attributes (*guṇataḥ*) is *Brahman*. These two attributes are applicable only to the supreme personal Being (*Sarveśvara*) and not to an undifferentiated being (*Nirviśeṣa Brahman*). In this view, Rāmānuja states that the term *Brahman* denotes *Puruṣōttama* or Supreme Personal Being who by its very nature is free from all imperfections (*nirasthanikhila doṣaḥ*) and possesses infinite auspicious attributes of unsurpassable excellence. (*ananta kalyāṇa guṇa gaṇaḥ*).⁵³

The introduction to the GBR is Rāmānuja's central text on the study of the doctrine of the Divine/ Supreme Person. The introduction contains two distinct sections concerning the

unreachable status and accessibility of the Divine. The first section describes the attributes of Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*). This is the Para manifestation of God in highest glory. He is named as *Vāsudeva*. He is an ocean of auspicious attributes of matchless excellence inherent in His nature. As *śāḍguṇya vigraha*, he is the repository of six qualities. They are knowledge, untiring strength, sovereignty, immutability, creative power, and splendor.⁵⁴ To these six qualities Rāmānuja adds two more-*niṣpāpa* and *satyasaṅkalpa*. The first part of the introduction to the GBR closes with a clear statement of His inaccessibility: This *Nārāyaṇa*, the Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*), when He created the entire universe of everything from the God *Brahmā* to motionless stones, remains with His same essential nature and is inaccessible even by such means as the meditation and worship of men or of Gods like *Brahmā*. In this first section we are told the Supreme Person possesses every auspicious quality and is incomparable to any other. He creates and dissolves the universe and all its creatures of his own volition without a necessary end. Yet in the midst of creating an ever-changing universe He remains unchanged in His essential nature. This is an abstract Divinity and is by definition not material. Here *Brahman* is said to be attributeless (*Nirguṇa*)

because he is devoid of the impure qualities derived from *Prkṛti*. This is the Supreme Person that the proponents of Advaita aspire to, yet He is ultimately inaccessible. This is not the Supreme Person with qualities of a Personal Lord who is necessary for the devotional relationship of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*.

The second section of the introduction describes the Supreme Person in terms that establish his earthly form and imply his accessibility. Being a shore-less ocean of compassion, gracious condescension, forgiving love or motherly affection⁵⁵ (*vātsalya*) and generosity, while still not losing His own inherent nature and attributes (*sva-svabhāvam-ajahad-eva*), He has assumed His own bodily form (*svam-eva-rūpam*), which on each occasion has the same generic structure as one of the various classes of creatures, and in these various shapes He has descended again and again to the various worlds where they dwell, where having been worshiped by these different kinds of creatures, He has granted them whatever they prayed for, whether meritorious action, wealth, physical pleasure or deliverance, according to their own desire.

The Manifestations of the Personal God : According to Rāmānuja's philosophy, God as personal Lord assumes five

kinds of forms with the sole object of favoring the devotees and protecting the universe. These forms include the Eternal manifestation (*Paravibhūthi*), the four fold manifestations (*Vyūha*), Incarnations (*Vibhava*), The inner controller (*Antharyāmī*) and Images (*Arcāvathāra*).

Paravibhūthi is the Personal Lord who is also known as *Nārāyaṇa* and *Paravāsudeva*. He is qualified by the infinite, auspicious attributes. He is enjoyed by the eternally released souls. He is accompanied by *Śrī*, *Bhū* and *Nilā*. He is equipped with the divine weapons like Conch, discus etc. He is seated on *śeṣa* adorned with divine ornaments.⁵⁶

The *Vyūha* manifestation, one of the foundational doctrines of *pañcarātra*⁵⁷, forms part and parcel of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* conception of God. Here God manifests himself as *Vāsudeva*,⁵⁸ *Samkarṣaṇa*, *Pradyumna* and *Aniruddha*. *Vāsudeva* is possessed of six qualities of Lordship in perfection. As the highest self it possesses the following *guṇas*: *jñāna* (knowledge), *aiśvarya* (lordship), *śakthi* (potency), *bala* (strength), *vīrya* (virility) and *tejas* (splendour). *Samkarṣaṇa* is possessed of knowledge and strength. It presides over the individual souls. It differentiates the soul from the *prakṛti* and reveals the scriptures.

Samkarṣaṇa activates the destruction of the universe and propounds the scriptures. *Pradyumna* is possessed of ruler-ship and virility. It presides over the mind. He is the instructor of Dharma and the author of pure creation. He creates the universe and introduces all the *dharma*s. *Aniruddha* is possessed of power and self- sufficiency. It presides over the egoism (*aḥamkāra*). He is the giver of true knowledge. He is the author of the time and the mixed creation. He preserves the world, protects the creation and makes known the *tattva*. *Vyūha* manifestation is the creation, preservation and the destruction of the world.

Vibhava manifestation is the descent of *Īśvara* among beings. This descent occurs by means of forms similar to that of genus. It is of ten modes⁵⁹ of particular *avathars*. These *avathars* are: *Matsya*⁶⁰: it was assumed for restoring the *Vedas* to *Brahma* by defeating the demons who had stolen *Vedas*; *Kūrma*⁶¹: for supporting the mountain *Māndara*, it descended. It was for generating nectar for the non-decay and immortality of *devas*; *Varāha*⁶²: to protect his own consort, *Bhūmi*. It was manifested with the desire to save humanity sunk in the ocean of phenomenal existence; *Narasimha*⁶³: it was assumed within the pillar for the destruction the giant, *Hiraṇya Kaśipu* and to reveal the protection offered to the devotee who had sought the shelter

in the Lord; *Vāmana*⁶⁴: it was assumed for the protection of the world by cleansing its sins with the water (*Gaṅga*) arising from his lotus feet while he became *Trivikrama*; *Paraśu Rāma*⁶⁵ it was for the annihilation of the wicked *Kṣatriyas*; *Śrī Rāma*⁶⁶: it was assumed for the protection of those who had surrendered to him and for the establishment for the dharma; *Bala Rāma*⁶⁷ it was assumed to destroy *Pralamba* etc; *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*⁶⁸ this was pointing out to humanity the means for liberation; *Kalkī*: this will descend for the establishment of *dharma* in its entirety by the destruction of the unrighteous and for liberating the world from *Kali*.

God manifests as *Antharyāmin*⁶⁹. It abides in the heart of men and in the world. It stays within the individual self as its friend in its status of experience like heaven and hell. It is perceptible to *yogin*. *Arcāvatāra* is the manifestation of God in the objects of worship such as images⁷⁰. It creates attachment in devotee for God.

These manifestations of Supreme Person are one of actions in relationship to someone or something. Actions of compassion, gracious condescension, forgiving, love and generosity⁷¹ require another person to participate in the action

.Through these qualities the Supreme Person makes himself accessible to the devotee: “He has assumed His own bodily form; He has descended again and again to the various worlds.”⁷² This is the Divinity of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*, a Personal Lord with bodily form. According to Rāmānuja, to understand the Divine fully is to realize that the abstract Divinity and the Personal Lord are one in the same. However Rāmānuja does not apply the categories of inaccessibility and accessibility with the precision of his commentators. By emphasizing the notion of a Supreme Lord, Rāmānuja directly explains the attributes found in the Personal Lord.

The *Viśiṣṭādvaita* epistemology makes a distinction between the essential attributes and the secondary qualities in the Supreme Person. The essential attributes are those which are unique to a particular object and which constitute its distinguishing characteristics (*asādhāraṇa-dharma*). The nature of an object (*svarūpa*) is determined only in terms of such attributes. It is only on the basis of such characteristics that an object is distinguished from another object. The essential attributes are called *svarūpa nirūpaka-dharma*, i.e., the attributes which determine or define the essential nature of an object.

The essential Attributes of Brahman : The essential attributes of *Brahman* are *Satya* (unchanging or reality), *Jñāna* (knowledge), *ananta* (without limitations), *ānanta* (bliss) and *amala* (purity or free from imperfections). The first term ‘*Satyam*’ connotes unchanged ability and differentiates *Brahma* from matter, which continually undergoes changes in its substance, and from bound *jīvās*, who undergo changes in their attribute *Jñāna*.⁷³ The second term covers both the *Svarūpa* (substance) of *Brahma* and his attribute *Jñāna*. In this sense both are *Jñāna*, i.e., they show themselves and other things. It means that the *svārūpa* shows itself and the attributes of other things. The term shows also that *Brahma* possesses *Jñāna* as an attribute that has never suffered any change. It therefore differentiates *Brahma* from the freed *Jīvās*, whose *jñāna* had contracted before⁷⁴. According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita-vedānta*, *Brahman* is both *jñāna-svarūpa* and *jñāna-guṇaka*. The word ‘*ananta*’ denies of *Brahma* limitations of every kind. Three kinds of limitations are observed in the world: limitation in place, limitation in time, and limitation in objects. A thing is limited in place in the sense that it exists in one place only, and not in other place. It is limited in time if it exists at one time, and disappears at other times. It is limited in objects, if it cannot be identified with other objects. *Brahma* is

everywhere. He exist at all times, and can be identified with all objects. He is in every object as its *ātma*, and every word denotes Him in its primary sense. The absence of the last limitation may be understood also as denying the existence of any object that excels Him in any good quality. This will be to deny that there is any being equal or superior to him.

The word ‘Bliss’ or ‘*ānanta*’ shows that *Brahman* is most agreeable. He is bliss for on reaching this bliss, one becomes blissful. This means that by the enjoyment of *Brahma* one attains bliss. The word ‘*amala*’ shows *Brahma* in a feature, i.e., the reverse of the features found in the universe consisting of matter and *jīvās*. It is not found in the freed *jīva*, who though without imperfections in himself was fit to be connected with them. These five attributes differentiate *Brahma* from everything else, and show Him to be a unique Being. They are known as *Svarūpa-nirūpaka-dharmas*. According to the *Viśiṣṭādvaita-vedānta*, *Brahma* is free from all imperfections, and is the seat of all noble qualities. This is known as *ubhaya-liṅgam*⁷⁵ (two-fold marks).

The Six principal Attributes : Besides the five essential characteristics, *Brahman* possesses also numerous other

attributes. According to the *Viśiṣṭādvaita-vedānta*, *Brahman* is *ananta kalyaṇaguṇa viśiṣṭa*, i.e., one who is qualified by infinite number of auspicious attributes. The *pañcarātra Āgamās* have mentioned six attributes as very important. These are: *jñāna*, *bala*, *aiśvarya*, *vīrya tejās* and *śakti*. *Viṣṇupuraṇa* defines *Bhagavān* as the one who is endowed with these six qualities⁷⁶.

Jñāna : The term *jñāna* means omniscience or the capacity to know everything simultaneously. The perception of *Īśvara* is not dependent on the mind and the sense organs. The knowledge about Him is also not subject to contraction and expansion. It is eternal (*nitya*) and self-luminous (*svayamprakāśa*). It is in this sense that God is described in the Muṇ.Up as *Sarvajñaḥ* and *sarvavit* (omniscient)⁷⁷. This *jñāna* as an attribute of *Īśvara* is distinct from *jñāna* which is spoken of as the determinant of the *svarūpa* of *Brahman*.

Śakti : The general meaning of the term *śakti* is power. When it is regarded as an attribute of God, it is understood in the sense of omnipotence. Like *Sarvajñatva* (omniscience), *sarvaśaktitva* (omnipotence) is equally an important attribute of Personal Lord. God, who is admitted as the creator of the universe, should have the super power to bring forth such a variegated universe. It is a

special power inherent in *Īśvara*. In this sense, *Vedānta Desika* interprets the word as the power to create the entire universe.⁷⁸

Bala : The word *bala* means strength. It signifies the quality by which *Īśvara* supports without any effort everything in the universe, both sentient beings and the non-sentient material world⁷⁹. It is an important attribute of God because He should be able to hold all the created entities such as the heaven, planets, the physical universe etc., in their respective positions. It is in this sense that the Br.Up says that *Brahman* is the causeway that serves as the supporter to keep apart the different worlds.⁸⁰

Aiśvarya : *Aiśvarya* means lordship. It signifies the quality of controllership of the entire universe by His unchecked freedom⁸¹. This is a significant attribute because by virtue of this quality God becomes the Supreme Lord (*Sarveśvara*). The Br.Up describes *Brahman* as *Sarvasyavāsi*, the lord of all. It also allocates *Brahman* as *Sarveśvara*.⁸²

Vīrya : *Vīrya* means energy. As an attribute of God, it signifies the special quality by means of which the Supreme Being remains unaffected by changes in spite of His being the material cause of the universe, the ground and the inner controller of everything⁸³. *Viṣṇu* is, therefore, describes as *avikāra* or the one

who is not subject to any kind of modification, thereby asserting His transcendental character.

Tejas : The general meaning of *tejas* is splendour. As an attribute of God it signifies the power of self-sufficiency. It is defined as the power which is not in need of any external aids. That is, it is a special power of God by means of which He is able to create the universe without the help of any other accessories⁸⁴. Except His will *Īśvara* as the creator of the universe does not need a body, the sense organs and any other instrument.⁸⁵

Of the six attributes of God outlined above, the first two *jñāna* and *śakti* are regarded as the most important ones. Any deity who is accepted as the Supreme should necessarily be omniscient and omnipotent. The other four are the different aspects of these two. These six attributes are distinct from the five essential attributes.

Secondary Attributes : Rāmānuja describes the following nineteen important *guṇās* or the secondary qualities of God. *Sauśīlya*, *Vātsalya*, *Mārdava*, *Ārjava*, *Sauhārda*, *Sāmya*, *Kāruṇya*, *Mādhurya*, *Gāṃbhīrya*, *Audārya*, *Cāturya*, *Sthairya*, *Dhairya*, *Śourya*, *Parākarma*, *Satyakāma*, *Satyasaṅkalpa*, *Kṛtitva*, *Kṛtajñātā*.

Sauśīlya : The word *Śīla* is commonly understood a good conduct. But with reference to God as an attribute, it refers to that virtue by which God, even being the Sovereign of the universe, mixes intimately with the inferior persons⁸⁶. Since such a condescension or communion takes place in a natural way without any motivation, it becomes *Sauśīlya* or gracious in character. It may also mean, as interpreted by Sudarśana Sūri, (commentator of BSRB), that virtue of God by which the devotees who approach Him are not made to entertain any fear on the ground that God is the Supreme being. At the same time, God also does not exhibit His quality of supremacy. Therefore the distinction between Himself and His devotees is not felt.

Vātsalya : *Vātsalya* means deep affection and as an attribute of God it signifies the loving disposition of the lord to ignore the defects of those who are to be protected by him⁸⁷. Sudarśana Sūri in his *Śrutaprakāśika* (commentary on BSRB) holds the same interpretation. Thus he states: ‘*Vātsalya* means the affection which makes God ignore the defects, as in the case of the mother and the other child.’⁸⁸ The commonly used example to illustrate this quality is the manner in which a cow licks the newly-born calf out of tender affection unmindful of the dirty

matter on its body. On the basis of this analogy it is pointed out that God out of His affection towards the devotees accept them without minding the sinful acts committed by them. The presence of this virtue in God encourages the devotees to seek His refuge without running away from Him out of fear of punishment for their sins.

Mārdava : The word *mārdava* literally means softness. As an attribute of god it signifies the quality of not being able to bear the separation from a devotee. It may also imply the lenient attitude taken by God towards the individuals who deserve punishment for the offences committed by them.⁸⁹

Ārjava : *Ārjava* means straight forwardness. It implies being very truthful in thought, words and action.⁹⁰ This creates confidence in the minds of the devotees who approach God for protection.

Souhārda : The word *Suhṛt* means a friend or a well-wisher and *souhārdham* signifies the friendly deposition of God towards all living beings and also his concern for their well-being. The religious literature, therefore, describes God as a friend of all. If God wills to cause something bad to a few, it is not done on his own want only but, on the contrary, it is a dispensation of

punishment in accordance with the karma of being a well-wisher to all is not thus affected.

Sāmya : *Sāmya* means equality. As an attribute of God it implies that God treats all devotees as equal without discriminating them on the basis of high or low status due to caste, character and profession. There are numerous episodes in the *Purāṇas* to illustrate this special virtue of God.

Kāruṇya : *Karuṇa* means compassion. *Kāruṇya* as an attribute of god is interpreted as a desire on the part of God to remove the suffering of an individual without any selfish motive.⁹¹ Two other terms which are used as synonymous with *kāruṇya* are *dayā* and *kṛpa*. *Kṛpa* is defined by *Vedānta Deśika* as the desire to remove the sorrows of others. It is an important quality of god because it forms the desire to remove the sorrows of others. It is an important quality of God because it forms the basis for grace. The *Vaiṣṇava* literature, therefore, describes Supreme being as *karuṇā-nidhi* and *Dayā-nidhi*, the one who is the personification of compassion.

Mādhurya : *Madhura* means sweetness and *Mādhurya* refers to the enchanting beauty of the lord which captures the hearts of the devotees.

Gāṃbhīrya : This interpreted as the incomprehensible nature of the grace of God.⁹² It is also explained in a different way. Though God is fully aware of the faults of the devotees and their low status as compared to His own, He does not disclose this fact. *Gāṃbhīrya* is such an unrevealed grandeur of God. In this sense *Viṣṇu* though He is omniscient is described as *avijñāna* or as one who is not aware of the faults of the devotees.

Audārya : the general meaning of *udāra* is generosity. As the quality of the Supreme Being, it refers to the bountiful character of God who is very keen to grant the boons to the devotees without an expectation of anything in return and also without any regard to the greatness of His gift and smallness of the recipients. Besides, even after granting bountiful gifts, God feels that He has not given enough to his devotees⁹³.

Cāturya : The word *catura* means skilful and *cāturya* as an attribute of God refers to His *capacity* to generate faith in the minds of devotees by dispelling their doubts about the divine power and at the same time by not disclosing to them that He is fully aware of their faults. He does not this by revealing his enchanting personality to the devotees that the latter are induced

to mediate on Him and gradually develop the spirit of detachment from the object of pleasure.⁹⁴

Sthāīrya : this is a mental quality implying the steadfast character of the divine Being to save his devotees at any cost in spite of their faults being brought to His attention by others.

Dhairya, *Śaurya* and *Parākramah* : These three are also mental qualities referring to the courage of the Lord to fight and destroy the obstacles in the way of the devotees. These are amply demonstrated in the numerous Rāmāyaṇa episodes when God-incarnate is called upon to fight the evil forces such as the demons to protect His devotees.

Satyakāma and *Satyasaṅkalpa* : *Kāma* means what is desired. It refers to the auspicious attributes and the glory of the Lord which are desired by God and are also aspired by the devotees.⁹⁵ As these are of eternal glory nature, they are regarded as *Satyakāma*. God is *Satyakāma* because He is endowed with such an eternal glory which the devotees yearn to experience. *Saṅkalpa* means will and *Satya* is ever truthful. *Satyasaṅkalpa* as an attribute of God signifies that Gods will to grant the *mokṣa* or His will to create the universe is not obstructed.

Kṛtitva and *Kṛtajñāta* : *Kṛta* means the helping nature (*upakāra*) and *kṛtitva* is the one who is endowed with it. Its implication is that after fully complying with the request of the devotee, God feels relieved that He has fulfilled His obligation to the devotee and there is nothing more to do in this regard. *Kṛtajñāta* is the quality of feeling satisfaction even with one insignificant good act of the devotee and ignore his many other offences.

In the preceding paragraphs of this study we have seen a brief account of the five essential attributes which determine the *svarūpa* of the Supreme Deity (*Svarūpa-nirūpaka-dharmas*), six principle attributes (*śadguṇas*), which exhibit the supremacy of the lord and nineteen other *guṇas* (*nirūpita-svarūpa-viśeṣaṇas*), which are the natural qualities of God useful for the devotees seeking the protection from Him.

We find elaborate expression of all these attributes in the hymns of the *Ālvars* who are claimed to have a mystic experience of God. These are, therefore, well established attributes of God and have to be admitted by any sound theistic system which postulates the existence of a personal Supreme Deity. In the case of the *Vaiṣṇava* theism, which deals with the attributes of God systematically on a rational basis, the concepts

expounded are in conformity with the teachings of the sacred texts and as such are authoritative and also meaningful. In view of this *Vaiṣṇavism* as expounded by Rāmānuja and his followers, repeatedly use the two phrases *akhila-heyapratyanīka* and *anatakalyāṇaguṇaviśiṣṭa* whenever it speaks of *Brahman* or the Supreme Person (*puruṣaottama*). According to Rāmānuja, the *Vedānta sūtra* also refers to this two-fold aspects of *Brahman* (*Ubhayaliṅgatva*)⁹⁶

Viśiṣṭādvaita believes that *Puruṣōttama*, that is, the highest *puruṣa*, is the Highest Reality. The Highest Reality is a composite entity, where oneness is associated with *viśeṣya-viśeṣaṇa-bhāva* or *ātmaśarīra-bhāva*. The individual soul-cit and the world *acit* form the body of the Lord. *Viṣṇu* is the *Paramṇipuruṣa* or *Puruṣōttama*, the Lord. He is possessed of all auspicious qualities, about which we have already seen in the fore-going section. It is this *Puruṣōttama* is the object of devotion for the devotees.

In order to speak about the relationship between the Divine and the devotee one has to describe the view of *bhakti* as the interaction between the Divine and the devotee expounded in

Viśiṣṭādvaita System. This is one of Rāmānuja’s major points that help us in explaining his view of Theism further.

3.6 The Relationship between the Personal Lord and Devotee

Rāmānuja’s definition of the finite self is committed to maintain the devotional relationship of the self with the personal lord. He does not agree with the definition of the finite self as one whose essential nature is wholly consciousness, or that which has cognition alone as its distinguishing attribute. The devotee is the finite self (*jīvātmā*). The Sanskrit compound *jīvātmā* consists of the verbal root *jīv*, “to live” and the noun *ātman*, the individual or abstract self. In conjunction with this literal root of the word *jīvātmā* Rāmānuja adds the soul’s most important characteristic, its liege-ship to God (*śeṣatva*). Defining the soul as consciousness alone without its being essentially related to God ignores its most essential relationship and without this relationship nothing said of the soul make any sense. For the soul without a relationship to God was same as light existing without the sun. To define the finite soul as wholly consciousness did not provide the distinction necessary to

support the devotional relationship which was the core of *Śrīvaiṣṇava* Theology.

According to Rāmānuja, *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti* are the three successive means to attain liberation. *Bhakti* is the final path to liberation. *Karma* and *jñāna* are preliminaries to *bhakti*. It is the intensity of love and constant longing for God where a devotee becomes God-intoxicated. In Rāmānuja's philosophy the real knowledge is identified with the highest *bhakti*. Salvation and *bhakti* are so related that at every stage of *bhakti* one perfects oneself.

Rāmānuja makes slight distinction between *bhakti* (devotion) and *prapatti* (self-surrender).⁹⁷ *Prapatti* is the highest preliminary as well as consequence of *bhakti*. When love for God arises in the heart of devotee he surrenders his will to God's will. It is the oblation for the service for God. The important point of *bhakti* in Rāmānuja's philosophy is that in *bhakti* there is not complete union between the devotee and the personal lord. Rāmānuja's work attempts to reveal the devotionism of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*. He relies on the adjectival use *para* (high, supreme) to indicate a personal lord that is best suited to his firm assertion that the Supreme Person is not only a general form, but also a

concrete Person with a bodily form with qualities, supreme over or higher than the finite soul. This is the place where the Supreme Person is inaccessible to the finite soul and this inaccessibility supports the *Vedāntic* position that the Supreme Person is the Ultimate Reality. But this inaccessibility should not be understood as the unattainable status of the personal lord. Rāmānuja's sense of inaccessibility explains positively the attempts made by the devotee to love God. Unless the devotee makes personal attempts to love God, personal lord is inaccessible to him. Rāmānuja uses the adjective *sulabha* in the⁹⁸ “For the one who constantly remembers Me and never lets his thoughts stray to any other object, for this disciplined *yogī*, I am easily attainable (*sulabhaḥ*)”. So inaccessibility should be understood from the point of view of devotee's personal attempt to love God. But still the grace of God is necessary for the attainment of the personal relation between the devotee and the lord. So the notion of inaccessibility also indicates the divine initiative in the relationship between the devotee and the lord. With reference to divine grace even the highest amount of personal efforts from the part of devotee is secondary.

Rāmānuja pays attention to the idea of easy attainability or accessibility of the personal lord lest he mislead the devotee with the thought of effortless access by failing to uphold the supremacy of Divine grace. Achieving the discipline of a *yogi* is famously difficult, and Rāmānuja wants to be clear that no amount of even superhuman effort will result in the attainment of the Highest Lord without the extension of Divine grace. It is because of the gift of Divine grace that the Highest Person can be easily obtained by the devotee. Rāmānuja writes in: “And I am easily attained, for unable to bear separation from him (the highest kind of devotee who cannot live without Me), I Myself choose him (*aham-eva-tam varṇe*), and it is I Myself who grant (*aham-evadadāmi*) him the fruition of His meditation”⁹⁹.

In *Śrīvaiṣṇava* understanding, intense devotion (*bhakti*) is the way to union with the Divine. Once the devotee (*bhakta*) has achieved the difficult state of one pointed focus on the Divine, he is irresistible to the Divine. *Bhakta*, from the verbal root *bhaj* “to share with”, implies a requisite exchange between the devotee and its object. When the *bhakta* becomes irresistible to the Divine, the Divine cannot help but extend grace. It is this irresistibility and subsequent extension of Divine grace that

warrants the use of the adjective accessibility according to Rāmānuja. Hence both the divine grace and the intense preparation of the devotee are required to attain the relation between the lord and the *bhakta*.

In his philosophy Rāmānuja insists on elaborate preparation for *bhakti*. The chief steps or *sādhana*s involved in the preparation of *bhakti* are the following: *viveka* or discrimination of good. According to Rāmānuja the purity of mind and body are affected by good ; *vimoka* or freedom from slavery to one's passions like infatuation, vanity and jealousy. They are contrary to spiritual advancement ; *abhyāsa* or continuous thinking of God. Accordingly all mental activities should be directed to God only ; *kriya* or performance of five great sacrifices- By the performance of these sacrifices the body is rendered fit for the apprehension of the lord; *kalyāṇa* or auspicious deeds- It consists in the cultivation of virtues like compassion, straight forwardness, equanimity, purity, serenity, fortitude, forgiveness, liberality and mercy etc; *anavasādi* or non-dejection. According to it spiritual man should develop equanimity. He should not lose heart in adverse situations. He must remain calm and undisturbed in the sorbs and throbs of life. Depression is injurious to the integration of the personality; and

anuddharśa or absence of elation. There should be total absence of excitement at the moment of pleasure and depression at the moment of pain. According to Rāmānuja these *sādhana-saptāka* (seven steps of preparation) aim at physical, mental and moral development of man and are integral aid of *bhakthi*.

Sādhana-saptaka, according to Rāmānuja, has got three stages and nine phases. Three stages are: *dhruvānusmṛti*, *asakṛdavr̥ttiḥ*, and *darśana-samānakārata*. In order to explore the nature of the deep loving relationship between the devotee and the personal lord Rāmānuja elaborately deals with the nine phases of *sādhana-saptāka* well-known as *navadhā-bhakthi*.¹⁰⁰ They are *śravaṇam*, *kīrthanam*, *smaraṇam*, *pādasevanam*, *archanam*, *vandanam*, *dāsyam*, *sakhyam* and *ātmanivedanam*.

The discussion of the *śeṣi* (master)/*śeṣa* (servant) relationship exposed in the description of *navadhā-bhakti* results from Rāmānuja's theological expositions on the nature of the finite human self (*jīvātmā*) and its relationship to the Supreme Self (*paramātmā*) or God. It is this relationship that Rāmānuja uses to reveal the dynamics between the Supreme Person and the finite person. This is also where he reveals the dissolution of hierarchy that appears to separate the Supreme

Person from the finite person. *Navadhā-bhakti* is presented as means to maintain the relationship between the lord and the devotee. These nine steps speak about the slow movement that facilitates the dissolution of the separate nature of the supreme self and the finite self.

Nine steps of *Navadhā-bhakti* are: *Śravaṇam* (hearing of the holy name of the Lord)- Hearing of the holy name of the lord from the text of S.Bh is the beginning of the devotional service. It is fortunate to hear the name of the lord from the realized devotee. To be initiated in devotional service it is essential to hear the holy name and the qualities of the lord. S.Bh says: “Verses describing the name, form and qualities of Ananta deva, the unlimited supreme lord, are able to vanquish all the sinful reactions of the entire world. Therefore even if such verses are improperly composed, devotees hear them, describe them and accept them as bonafide and authorized”; *Kīrthanam* (chanting of the holy name)- it is recommended that chanting is to be performed loudly. By chanting the holy name one advances in spiritual life. In *Kali-yuga* it is required to progress in life. In *kīrthanam* one should be careful to avoid ten offences. They are: to blaspheme a devotee, especially a devotee engaged in chanting

the glories of the holy name; to consider the name of the lord Śiva or any other demigod to be equally as powerful as the holy name of the supreme personality of god- head; to disobey the instructions of the spiritual master; to blaspheme the Vedic literatures and literatures compiled in pursuance of the Vedic literatures; to comment that the glories of the holy name of the lord are exaggerated; to interpret the holy name in a deviant way; to commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting the holy name; to compare the chanting of the holy name to pious activities; to instruct the glories of the holy name to a person who has no understanding of the chanting of the holy name; not to awaken in transcendental attachment for the chanting of the holy name even after hearing all these scriptural injunctions. The third step is *Smaraṇam* after one's heart is cleansed by hearing and chanting the holy name, remembering the holy name is recommended. As the nature of the relationship between the lord and devotee are differed so there are different forms of *nāmānukīrthanam*. In the same way there are five modes of remembering: conducting research into the worship of a particular form of the lord; concentrating the mind on one subject and withdrawing the mental functions of thinking, feeling and willing from all other subjects; concentrating on the particular

form of the lord (meditation); concentrating one's mind continuously on the form of the lord; and awakening a likening for concentrating upon a particular form (*Samādhī* or trance). Mental concentration upon particular pastimes of the lord in particular circumstances is also called remembrance. The fourth step is *Pādasevanam*—one obtains the perfection of the remembering when one constantly thinks of the lotus feet of the lord. Being intensely attached to thinking of the lord's lotus feet is called *Pādasevanam*. Adhere to the *Pādasevanam* there are processes like seeing and touching the form of the lord, circumambulating the form or temple of the lord, visiting the places like Jagannatha Puri, Dhwāraka, Madurai to see the lord's form and bathing in the Ganges or Yamuna. The fifth step is *Arcanam*. This is the worship of the deity. In order to attain the efficiency in *arcanam* one must positively take shelter of a spiritual master and learn the process from him. The sixth step is *Vandanam*. Although prayers are part of deity worship they may be considered separately too. The lord has got unlimited transcendental qualities and opulence. One who feels influenced by the lord's qualities in various activities offers prayers to the Lord. In this way one becomes successful. In connection with the *Vandanam* there are some of the offenses to be avoided: to offer

obeisance on one hand; to offer obeisance with one's body covered; to show ones back to the deity; to offer obeisance on the left side of the deity; to offer obeisance very near the deity. The seventh step is *Dāsyam*. This is the process of assisting the lord as the servant. The knowledge about which one is aware of after thousands of birth that one is a servant of *Kṛṣṇa* is capable of releasing others from the fetters of universe. The awareness that one is the eternal servant of *Kṛṣṇa* is a means for success in life. It is the sum and substance of all other steps of *navadhā bhakthi*. The eighth step is *Sakhyam*. This is about the worshipping of the lord as a friend. In the *Dāsyabhāva* the devotee accepts the supreme personality of god-head as a friend. When a devotee is pure in heart the opulence of his worship of the deity diminishes as spontaneous love for the personality of god-head is manifested. The ninth step is *Ātma-Nivedanam*. In this stage the devotee has no other motive than to serve the lord. He surrenders everything to the lord to please him. Such a devotee is like a cow that is cared for by its master.

Rāmānuja in his theological exposition chooses to assert mutual dependence over absorption in abstract unity beyond distinction. It appears that a move to dissolve the hierarchy between the personal lord and the devotee into absorption in

unity would be the most simple and direct means to reconcile the non-dualism of Advaita with the devotionism of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*. This is the logic that *Advaitins* use to resolve the conflict between the two schools of thought and which allows them to assert the ultimate superiority of their view while accepting the view of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*. The *Advaitins* allow that ultimate union can be achieved via the practice of devotion to a personal lord. However, when union is achieved they argue that there is a realization that the distinction between the devotee and the lord never actually existed. Therefore, they argue that the path of Advaita is ultimately superior path to that of devotion.

Rāmānuja sets out to prove the validity of all the teachings of *Vedānta*, which assert the truth that the Supreme Person is both the substance of all reality and a material Personal Lord. For him abandoning the concept of Personal Lord, as the *Advaitins* do in their final assertion, ultimately denies the validity of devotion to a Personal Lord. Rāmānuja reveals a reversal of hierarchy, which allows for mutual dependence between the participants in the relationship. The divine and the devotee thus exist not as separate entities but parts of the same whole. Mutual dependence between the Supreme Person and the

devotee bridges the gap between non-dualistic *Advaita* and the devotion of *Śrīvaiṣṇava*.

3.7 The Philosophy of Theistic Position in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* System

Viśiṣṭādvaita is neither *Advaita*, nor *Dvaita* but may be called as ‘*Traita*’. *Cit* and *acit* are the *prakāras* (modes) in which *paramapurūṣa*, the highest Being manifests Himself as the visible universe. Therefore the philosophical knowledge about *Viśiṣṭādvaita* consists in clearly understanding the nature of the three entities, namely, *cit-acit-Īśvara*, their distinctness from one another and also their relations with one another. These are the *Tattvatraya* or three truth of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. The essence of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is explained in the YMD.¹⁰¹

Viśiṣṭādvaita is a philosophy of a personal God. In its view God is one but characterized by certain attributes. Lord *Viṣṇu* is the *Paramapurūṣa*. He is denoted by the term *Brahman* in the scriptures.¹⁰²

The characteristics of *Īśvara* are that He is the controller of all, the worshipped in every religious act, the giver of all fruits, the sustainer of all, the cause of all effects and has everything except Himself and His consciousness as His body.¹⁰³

Īśvara becomes the material cause of the universe by virtue of His nature as qualified by the sentient and non-sentient in their subtle state. He becomes the efficient cause by virtue of His nature as qualified by His will and also the co-operant cause by virtue of His nature as the immanent in time etc.

God (*Īśvara*) is endowed with infinite auspicious qualities¹⁰⁴. Attributes forming His *Svarūpa* or essence are existence, consciousness, bliss, infinitude and purity. As the creator of the world, he possesses attributes like omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence etc. *Īśvara* is all pervading; he is not limited by space, time or any other object of the world. Being the ultimate refuge of all the *Jīvas*, He is endowed with qualities like *souśīlya*, *soulabhya*, *vātsalya*, *kāruṇya* etc. The most prominent qualities of *Īśvara* are: knowledge, power and love.

God is eternal, infinite and also possesses infinite attributes. He is not only the efficient cause but the material cause and co-operative cause also.¹⁰⁵

God is distinguished from everything else in the universe. He always exists in inseparable relation to individual souls and nature. The world is inseparable from *Brahman*. It emanates from

Brahman after the manner of the spider's web¹⁰⁶ The web is woven out of the internal secretion of the spider and into which after having been woven it enters. Thus *Brahman* enters the world of sentient and non-sentient things. The relation of the *Brahman* to the sentient and non-sentient creation has been elaborated by Rāmānuja in his concept of *śarīrāśārīrabhāva*, *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāva*, *śeṣaśeṣībhāva*, *aṃśā-aṃśībhāva*, *ādheyādhārabhāva*, *niyantyāniyantrbhāva*, *rakṣyarakṣakabhāva* at any places.

The individual soul is the body of the Lord. Rāmānuja says that individual souls are real and many. It is *aṃśa* or part of the Lord in the sense that it is His inseparable attribute and an attribute is a part of the qualified whole. As the body obeys the soul, so both souls and matter obey the Lord. Its special characteristics in relation to *Īśvara* are *Śeṣatva* (dependence) or *paratantratvā* (subservience), *vidheyatvā* and or *ādheyatvā*. *Brahman* is both, the embodied soul as well as the body.

Blissful in itself, *Brahman* becomes the doer, the enjoyer, the embodied one and body itself. From the point of view of *Prakṛti* it becomes the embodied self and from the point of view of God it becomes the body itself¹⁰⁷.

In the time of creation *Brahman* wills to create the world in its gross form, and its body undergoes a modification and develops names and forms. In both conditions *Brahman* is its inner self. The purpose of creation is explained by Rāmānuja in the commentary on “ लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम् ”.¹⁰⁸ He describes the point by applying an analogy of Kings and children. Kings engage themselves in activities, such as playing with a ball, without any motive for mere amusement. Children play out of fun. So also *Brahman*, without any purpose to gain, engages itself in creating this world as a mere *līla* (sport).

According to Rāmānuja’s philosophy, God as personal Lord assumes five kinds of forms¹⁰⁹ with the sole object of favoring the devotees and protecting the universe. These forms include the Eternal manifestation, the four fold manifestations, incarnations, The inner controller, and images.¹¹⁰

Even in all these aforesaid fivefold states *Bhagavān* is ever present with *Śrī*, this import is established by scripture and other means of knowledge.

In *Viśiṣṭādvaita* the concept of *Mokṣa* is explained as Divine service. Liberation consists in attaining a nature like that of the Supreme Person. Liberation is not the annihilation of the

self. The liberated soul does not become one with the *Brahman*. Liberation consists in reaching the *Vaikuṇṭha* and in having the privilege of being near the Lord and Serving Him. The ‘liberated soul’ can enjoy all that he wishes for, in the *Vaikuṇṭha* in any form which he commands at will. The only restriction placed upon his power is that he cannot participate in the act of creating etc., of the world.

Rāmānuja does not accept jīvanmukti. He argues that, “Because it is not possible to have direct realization by knowing sentences, so removal of avidyā is also not possible by knowing the meaning of such sentences. Due to same reason the liberation while living is also set aside” “यतो वाक्यादपरोक्षज्ञानाऽसंभवात् वाक्यार्थज्ञानेनाविद्या न निवर्तने, तत एव जीवन्मुक्तिरपि दूरोत्सारिता ”।¹¹¹

After this description of Rāmānuja’s philosophy of theism, this thesis moves to the elaboration of theistic position in *Dvaita* Philosophy, which is one of the prominent Systems of thought in Indian Philosophical Schools.

NOTES

- ¹ R.V., IV. 55.4
व्ययमा वरुणश्चेति पन्थामिषस्पतिः सुवितं गातुमग्निः ।
इन्द्रविष्णु नृवदुषुस्तवानाशर्मनो यन्तममवद्वरूथम् ॥
- ² M.Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, George Allen and Unwin Ltd.,
London, 1932, p.100
- ³ Mun.Up., I.4.5
द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये परा च अपरा च ।
- ⁴ BSRB., IV. 2.1-20 in 13:728-743
- ⁵ Ibid., III. 2.3 in 13:602; *Sribhāṣya* II. 1.9 in 13:421-424
- ⁶ Ahs L., II.52
व्याप्नोति देशकालाभ्यां सर्वं यद्रूपतोपि च तत् परं गदितं सद्भिः निरूपणात्।
- ⁷ Ibid., 41.
कान्तिर्नाम गुणः सोऽयं वशोर्धातोनिरूपणात् ...आत्मभावेन चेतना ।
- ⁸ VP., I.1.31
विष्णोः सकाशाद्भुतं जगत् तत्रैव च स्थितम्।
स्थिति संयम कतासौ जगतोऽस्य जगच्छ सः॥
- ⁹ Ibid., I.2.12.
सर्वत्रासौ समस्तं च वसत्यात्रोति वै यतः ।
ततः स वासुदेवेति विद्वद्भिः परिपठयते॥
- ¹⁰ Tn.Up., 94
अन्तर्बहिश्च तत् सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः ।
- ¹¹ Ahs L., II.68
- ¹² Ibid., II.51-54
नर सम्बन्धिनो नारा नरः स पुरुषोत्तमः ।
नर सम्बन्धिनः सर्वं चेतनाचेतनात्मकाः ।
ईशितव्यत्वा नाराधार्या पोष्यतया तथा ।
नियाम्यत्वेन सृज्यत्व प्रवेश भरणैः तथा ।
अयते निखिलान् नारन् व्याप्नोति क्रियया तथा ।
नाराश्चापि अयनं तस्य तैः तद्भाव निरूपणात् ।
नाराणां अयनां वासस्ते च तस्यायनं सदा ।
परमा च गतिः तेषां नाराणां आत्मानां सदा ॥
- ¹³ VP., III.3.23
ब्राह्मत्वात् ब्रह्मणत्वाच्छ तत्तद्ब्रह्मेति अभिधीयते ।
- ¹⁴ Ibid., VI.5.76
एवमेष महान् शब्दो मैत्रेय भगवानिति ।
परब्रह्मभूतस्य वासुदेवस्य नान्यगः ॥
- ¹⁵ Ibid., VI.5.79
ज्ञानशक्ति बलैश्वर्य वीर्य तेजांसि अशेषतः ।
भगवत् शब्द वाच्यानि विना हेयैर्गुणदिभिः ।

- ¹⁶ While commentating on Antaryāmin Brāhmaṇ of Br.Up. Śaṅkara identifies the antaryāmin with Nārāyaṇa
- ¹⁷ Yamuna (AD.916-1041) wrote a work entitled Mahāpuruṣanirṇaya. It is not extent but it is listed among the works of Yamuna by Vedānta Deśika. Preseably this treatise must have been devoted to the vindication of the supremacy of Viṣṇu as against the claims of Śaivates. If we assuming that this work was compared about A.D.950, the rivalry between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism world have existed during 9th century.
- ¹⁸ BSRB., I.1.1
- ¹⁹ Ibid., I.1.1. pp.5, 80, 89, Bhagavad Gīta Bhāṣya I. Intro, IX.34.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid
- ²² BSSB., VI.II.1.p.506
सदेव सदित्यस्तितामात्रं वस्तु सूक्ष्मं निर्विशेषं सर्वगतमेकं निरञ्चनं ...
नास्य द्वितीयं वस्त्वन्तरं विद्यते इत्यद्वितीयम् ।।
- ²³ According to the commentator Nṛsimhasarasvati, the term ‘impartite’ (akhaṇḍa) means that-“devoid of anything of a like kind or of a different kind, and without internal variety”.
- ²⁴ The technical word used for inherent relation is apr̥thaksiddhi or inseparability. According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita epistemology, a substance is inseparable from the attribute. Apr̥thaksiddha is a name given two relata which are inherently and inseparably related.
- ²⁵ BSRB., II.3.18
सूक्ष्मचिदचिद्विशिष्ट ब्रह्मकारणं स्थूलचिदचिद्विशिष्ट ब्रह्मकार्यमिति ।
- ²⁶ Ibid., II.1.9, p.413.
- ²⁷ Ibid., II.1.15, p.443.
- ²⁸ Ibid
प्रकारप्रकारिणोः प्रकारण च मिथो अत्यन्तभेदोऽपि
विशिष्टैक्यादि विवक्षया एकत्वं व्यपदेशः ।।
- ²⁹ Ibid , I.1.13, p.200
- ³⁰ Ibid, II.1.8-9, pp.409-12
- ³¹ VKAS, p.105.
- ³² VK., II.3.42. pp.235-6
- ³³ VKAS, p.103.
- ³⁴ Ibid., p.105
- ³⁵ BSRB, II.1.8-9, pp.409-12
- ³⁶ Ibid., I.1.1
ब्रह्मशब्देन स्वभावतो निरस्तनिखिलदोषोऽनवधिकातिशयासंख्येयकल्याणगुणगणः पुरुषोत्तमोऽभिधीयते
। सर्वत्र बृहत्त्वगुणयोगेन ब्रह्मशब्दः । बृहत्त्वञ्च स्वरूपेण गुणैश्च यत्रानवधिकातिशयं सोऽस्य
मुख्योऽर्थः । स च सर्वेश्वर एव । अतो ब्रह्मशब्दस्तत्रैव मुख्यावृत्तः ।
- ³⁷ Ibid

- 38 Ibid
न च निर्गुणवाक्यविरोधः, प्रकृतहेयगुण विषयत्वात् ज्ञानमात्रस्वरूपवादिन्योपि श्रुतयो ब्रह्माणो
ज्ञानस्वरूप-तामभिदधति न तावता निर्विशेषज्ञानमात्रमेव तत्त्वं, ज्ञातुरेव ज्ञानस्वरूपत्वात्।,
निर्गुणवाक्यानां , सगुणवाक्यानां च , विषयमपहतपाप्येत्याद्यपिपास इत्यन्तेन होयगुणान् प्रतिषिध्य
सत्यकाम सत्यसंकल्पइति ब्रह्मणःकल्याणगुणान् विधनीयं श्रुतिरेव विविनक्तीति
सगुणनिर्गुणवाक्ययोर्विरोधाभावादन्तरस्य मिथ्याविषयताश्रवणमपि नाशंकनीयम् ।
- 39 Ch.Up.,VI.2.1
सत्त्वेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवद्वितीयम् ॥
- 40 BSRB., 1.1.1
- 41 Tai. Up.,II.2.2
सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्मा ।
- 42 BSRB., 1.1.1
- 43 Śvet.Up.,VI.19
निष्कलम् निष्क्रियम् शान्तम् निरवद्यम् निरञ्जनम्
अमृतस्य परमं सेतम् दग्धेन्धनम् इव अनलम् ।
- 44 BSRB., 1.1.1
- 45 Mun.Up.,1.19
यःसर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् ज्ञानमयं तपः।
तस्मादेव ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते॥
- 46 Śve.Up.,VI.13
नित्यः नित्यानां चेतनः चेतनानां ...देवमुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥
- 47 Ibid., VI.7.8.
तं ईश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतं पतिं पतीनां परमं परस्तात् विदाम
देवं भुवनेशं ईड्यम् ॥ न तस्य कार्यं करणं च विद्यते न तत्समः च अभ्यधिकः च दृश्यते ।
परा अस्य शक्तिः विविधा एव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ॥
- 48 BSRB., III.3.33
- 49 Ibid., 1.1.13
- 50 Ibid
- 51 Ibid., 1.1.21
- 52 V.P., III 3.23
जगतः प्रलयोत्पत्योर्यत्तत् कारणसंज्ञितम् ।
महतः परमं गुह्यं तस्मै सुब्रह्मणे नमः ॥
- 53 BSRB., III
- 54 Ibid., II.2.41
- 55 SP., I.1.21, p.241.
- 56 VP., 1.22.69-70
भूतदिभिन्द्रियादि च द्विधाहंकारमीश्वरः।
बिभर्ति शंखरूपेण शाङ्गूरूपेण च स्थितम्॥
बलस्वरूपमत्यन्तजवेनान्तरितानिलम्
चक्रस्वरूपं च मनो धत्ते विष्णु करे स्थितम्॥

- ⁵⁷ These are the names given to the four vyūhas in the pāñcarātra texts. But Vaikhāṇasa system which also admits the principle of Vyūha emanation, uses different names. According to them Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha emanate from Viṣṇu who is known as Ādimūrti.
- ⁵⁸ Vāsudeva the highest Self possesses all the six guṇas, viz., jñāna (knowledge), aiśvarya (lordship), śakti (potency), bala (strength), vīrya (virility) and tejas (splendour). Cfr. Lakṣmītantra(VI, 25) 'Ṣāḍguṇyavigrahaṁ devam'.
- ⁵⁹ MBH. *Śāntiparvan*, 339-78.
मत्स्य कूर्मो वराहश्च नृसिंहश्च वामनः
रामो रामश्च रामश्च कृष्ण कल्कि च ते दशा ।।
- ⁶⁰ A.P., II. 2-5
मत्स्यावतारं वक्ष्येऽहं वसिष्ठ ... जले प्राह न मां क्षिप नृपात्तमः ।
- ⁶¹ A.P., III.1-2
वक्ष्ये कूर्मावतारं च संश्रुतं पापनाशनम्
सुरा क्षीराब्धिगं विष्णुमूचुः पालय वै सुरान् ।।
- ⁶² S.Br., 14.1.2.11
तं वराहो भूत्वा अहरत् ।
- ⁶³ S.Bh., II.7.22
- ⁶⁴ S.Br., 1.2.2.5.
- ⁶⁵ A.P., IV.12-13.
वक्ष्ये परशुरामस्य चावतारं .. भार्गव शास्त्रपारगः ।।
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., 1.22-23
- ⁶⁷ Ibid., 2.2-5
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., 6.1-3.
- ⁶⁹ SDS., p.223.
अन्तर्यामि सकलजीवन नियामकः ।
- ⁷⁰ Ibid
तत्रार्चा नाम प्रतिमादयः ।
- ⁷¹ SP., 1.1.21, p.245.
- ⁷² B.G., IV.6
अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वमधिष्ठाय संभावाम्यात्ममायया ।।
- ⁷³ BSRB., 1.1.2
सत्यपदं निरूपाधिक सत्तायोगि ब्रह्मा ।
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.
ज्ञानपदं नित्य असङ्कुचित ज्ञानैकारम् ।
- ⁷⁵ BSRB., III.2.11.
- ⁷⁶ VP., VI 5.79 .
ज्ञानशक्ति बलैश्वर्य वीर्य तेजांस्यशेषतः ।
भगवत् शब्द वाक्यानि विना हेयैर्गुणदिभिः ।।

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- 77 Mun.Up., 1.1.10
यःसर्वज्ञःसःसर्ववित् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।
- 78 Ga.Bh., Page 111
सर्व उपादानत्वात्मिका ।
- 79 Ibid .
श्रमप्रसङ्गरहितं सर्वधारण सामर्थ्यम् ।
- 80 Br.Up., VI.4.22
एष सेतुं विधरण येषां लोकानां असंभेदाय ।
- 81 Ga. Bh., P 111
अव्याहतेच्छां सर्वनियन्तृत्वम् ।
- 82 Br. Up., VI.4.22
येष सेतुं विधरण येषां लोकानां असंभेदाय ।
- 83 Ga.Bh.,111
सर्वोपादानत्वे सर्वधारणे सर्वनियमणोऽपि विकाररहितम् ।
- 84 Ibid., 111
अस्वाधीन सहकारियनपेक्षित्वम् ।
- 85 This point is also affirmed by the Ch.Up when it says that in the beginning there was sat only, one only and without any second. What is implied in this statement, according to the interpretation of Rāmānuja, is that *Brahman* is both the material and instrumental cause and that other than *Brahman* no other causal agencies are needed for the creation of the universe.
- 86 SP, I.1.21, Page 245.
See also Ga. Bh.,pp.22-23
महतो मन्दै सः निरन्ध्रेन संश्लेष स्वभावत्वम् ।
- 87 Ga. Bh.,111.
स्वरक्षणीयतया अभिमतेषु दोषतिरस्करणी प्रीतिः ।
- 88 SP., 1.1.21, p 245.
वात्सल्यं दोष अनादरहेतुः स्नेहः यथा मातुः पुत्रे ।
- 89 Ga.Bh., P. 111
- 90 Ibid., P.111
मनो वाक् काय व्यापाराणां मिथः संवादितम् ।
- 91 Ibid., P.112
अनुद्दिष्ट स्वप्रयोजनान्तरा परदुःखनिराकरणेच्छा ।
- 92 Ibid.
भक्तानुग्रहवदान्यत्वादेः आमूलतः दुरवगाहत्वम् ।
- 93 Ibid
- 94 Ibid
प्रभूतं दत्त्वोऽपि अतृप्तत्वम् ।
- 95 Ibid
मति शङ्काशमन दोष गोपनादि रूपं अजट क्रियात्वम् ।
- 96 BS., III.2.11

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- 97 Vedānta Deśika's commentary on Īśa.Up.18.
98 GBR., 8.14
99 Ibid
100 S.Bh., VII, 5.23
श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पीदसेवनम् ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥
101 Ibid
वस्तुतस्तु वेदान्तानां चिदचिद्विशिष्टाद्वैतम् एकमेव ब्रह्म इति तात्पर्यम् । अत एव चिदचिद्विशिष्टं ब्रह्म
एकमेवेति मत्वा भगवान् बादरायणः अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा इति उपक्रम्य तदेव सप्रकारं निरूपितवान्
अतः चिदचिद्विशिष्टः ब्रह्मशब्दवाच्यविष्णवाख्यः परवासुदेवो नारायण एवैकम् इति विशिष्टाद्वैतिनां
दर्शनमिति सिद्धम् ।
102 BSRB., I.I.I
103 YMD., P. 122
सर्वेश्वरत्वं सर्वशेषित्वं सर्वकर्मारार्थत्वं सर्वफलप्रदत्वं सर्वाधारत्वं
सर्वकार्योत्पादकत्वं स्वस्वज्ञानेतरसमस्तद्रव्यशरीरत्वं इत्यादीनि ईश्वरलक्षणानि ।
104 BSRB., I.I.I.
105 YMD.
ईश्वरः सूक्ष्मचिदचिद्विशिष्टवेष्टेण जगदुवादानकारणं भवति,
सङ्कल्पविशिष्टवेष्टेण निमित्तकारणं भवति, कालाद्यन्तर्यामिवेष्टेण सहकारिकारणं च ।
106 Mun.Up., II.1.1
स्थोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च ।
107 YMD.
सतः सुखी उपाधिवशात् संसारात् अयं च कर्ता, भोक्ता, शरीरि च भवति ।
प्रकृत्यपेक्षया शरीरी, ईश्वरापेक्षया शरीरम् ।
108 BS., II 1.33
109 YMD., p.133
ईश्वरः परव्यूहविभवान्तर्याम्यर्चावताररूपेण पञ्चप्रकारः ।
110 Ibid., p.139
अर्चावतारो नाम देशकालविप्रकर्ष रहित आश्रिताभिमतद्रव्यादिकं
शरीरतया स्वीकृत्य तस्मिन्नप्रकृतशरीरविशिष्टः ।
111 BSRB., 1.1.4

CHAPTER IV
THEISM IN DVAITA

The term ‘*Dvaita*’ is commonly used in Indian Philosophy to point out Śrī. Madhva’s¹ system. The Sanskrit term ‘*Dvaita*’ and its English equivalent ‘Dualism’ have certain association of ideas with established schools of ancient and modern thought. Dualism as it is understood in western philosophy is a “theory which admits two independent and mutually irreducible substances”.² In Indian philosophy, the *Sāṅkhya* dualism correspond this definition. But the ‘Dualism’ of Madhva, while admitting two mutually irreducible principles as constituting Reality as a whole, regards only one of them, viz., God, as independent and the other as dependent entity. According to Madhva, God or the Supreme Being is the one and only independent principle and all finite reality comprising the *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kāla*, *karma*, *svabhāva* etc., is dependent entities. This concept of two orders of reality (*tattvās*) viz., *svatantra* and *paratantra* is the major theme of Madhva’s philosophy.

The *svatantra* is presented as the personal God in *Dvaita* Philosophy. It is called *Viṣṇu* in it. He occupies the supreme and eminent position and possesses all excellences, that is, all positive qualities. He is *guṇapūrṇa*. According to *Dvaita* view point, God is known only through the scriptures and he cannot be

known completely even with the aid of revelation. Mādhva gives eight fold functions to God. He transcends *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which are the products of *prakṛti*. He possesses infinite power and mercy. He possesses perfect knowledge and unsurpassed bliss. According to Śrī Madhva, God is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. He controls the universe in each and every of its aspects. He is the giver of all knowledge, existence and the power to function on the part of souls. Besides, he is the instructor of all bondage. At the same time he is the savior of the souls. Madhva writes that “the individual self, matter, time and all exist only by his grace and would at once come to nothing, if that grace were withdrawn”.³ God gains nothing by his creation. Creation in all its aspects is a manifestation of God’s perfection. In Madhva’s view, the entire course of creation is for the self-realization of the souls through the scripturally ordained discipline.

According to *Dvaita* Philosophy, the supreme God is *Bhagavān Viṣṇu*. Goddess *Lakṣmī*, his consort possesses the same extension in time and space as does lord *Viṣṇu*. She is coeternal with him but without a material body. She witnesses the glory of God through eternity. *Lakṣmi-Nārāyaṇa* is presented

here as the object of worship. In Madhva's view, God is capable of assuming several incarnations. Like Rāmānuja, Madhva too, holds the doctrine that *Viṣṇu* is the ultimate significance of all words.

4.1 *Dvaita* view of Right Knowledge

In order to grasp Madhva's view on God we have to first probe into his positions about right knowledge that leads one to ultimate liberation. According to Madhva, the right knowledge about *prapañca* is the key factor in attaining the knowledge about God.

Madhva derives the word *prapañca* from the term *pañca* (five) and gives the etymology as *prakṛṣṭaḥ pañcavidho bhedaḥ prapañcaḥ*. (This valuable five fold difference is *prapañca*). The suffix '*da*' added to *pañca* signifies 'kind'. The prefix '*pra*' denotes excellence or value. *Prapañca* is excellent in the sense that knowledge of this fivefold difference constitutes right knowledge that leads to liberation.

The fivefold difference obvious in *prapañca* is explained by Madhva in his *Viṣṇutātparyavinirṇaya*. Madhva admits five fundamental differences between the different beings

(*Pañcabheda*) in *prapañca*. They are the differences between God and the souls, God and matter, the differences between souls and matter, between souls among themselves and between different material beings. These differences are real and irreducible. Madhva thinks that the universe is known as *prapañca* because it consists of (these) great, five kinds of differences.⁴

Madhva's theory of *prapañca* is interlinked to his view on *Viśeṣas*. It states that each substance with its inner unity-in-difference is different from other substances. Each substance is undivided in itself and divided from all others. According to *Dvaita*, difference is a primary datum of our consciousness and it is mainly experienced in the subject-object distinction of cognition. Madhva writes that "Generally each substantial nature is seen as different from all the other."⁵

According to *Dvaita*, difference is not an element which is added to an entity from outside, rather it is the very substantive nature of the entities. The *Viśeṣas* in Madhva's thought stand for the very essential nature of a being. It indicates being's possession of various inner forces which make real predications possible without in any way destroying the inner unity of that being. Now, Madhva considers difference also as an essential

constituent in establishing the nature of an entity in addition to the expression of the whole entity in its relation of opposition to another entity. Madhva writes that: “Just because difference implies the entity and the counter- entity (the two beings which are different from each other) the difference does not cease to be the essential nature of one entity just as much as its unity. Unity is the very essential nature of an entity in as much it is one with itself”.⁶ The notion of unity with reference to an entity is conceived by Madhva as the expression of the being in its relation of opposition to another. These are but the two aspects of the same being. This is the reason why we pick up difference in the apprehension of the essential nature of a being. Madhva extends this idea of the ‘individuality’ and ‘difference’ of being to its ultimate consequence when he says that “generally only after the cognition of the difference of a pot from all else, i.e, of the uniqueness of the pot, do we cognize its “potness”.⁷ This is an ontological and epistemological insistence on the particularity of being against its universality. It means that in Madhva ‘thisness’ (individuality) of an entity has primacy over ‘being’ or ‘existence’ which it has in common with others.

4. 2 The Body of *Viṣṇu*

The theme of the body of the *Viṣṇu* is directly linked to this thesis. Based on the hasty sketch that we made in the previous section about the *Dvaita* view about the right knowledge would help us to go deeply into Madhva's position about the body of the *Viṣṇu*.

Madhva develops his views on the body of *Viṣṇu* in the context of his anti-*Śaivite* position. The polemic against *Śaivism* formed an essential part of the *Vaiṣṇava* teaching for centuries⁸. The *BS* on which Madhva comments have an attack on the old *Śaiva-Pāśupata* teaching,⁹ though they attack also the old *Vaiṣṇava Pañcarātra* doctrines. While commenting on the *Pāśupatyādhikaraṇa* of the *BS* (that part of the *BS* which attacks the *Pāśupatas*)¹⁰ Madhva tries to prove that Siva is not the Absolute Being and therefore, he cannot be the cause of the origination of the world. According to the *Śaivites*, *Rudra* is a bodiless being.¹¹ “Since Siva is bodiless, he cannot have any causal relation to the world”,¹² says Madhva. What Madhva intends to say by this statement is that only an embodied being can enter into a causal relation with another being. Madhva compares a bodiless being to a corpse.¹³ A bodiless being is

inactive. Trivikrama explains that this argument is taken from experience¹⁴. Our experience tells us that only embodied being like a potter act as cause. Experience moreover, shows us that a cause before it acts must place itself on a ground and this evidently is possible only if the cause has a body.¹⁵ *Vaiṣṇava* philosophical tradition highlights that only an embodied being can really act and act purposefully. It is from the motion of the body that we come to know about activity. Certainly, the spirit is the ultimate source of activity and intention. But it is only from the movements of the body and from the position it takes and the direction towards which it tends, the activity of the spirit stands revealed. “Since *Śiva* is bodiless, he cannot have any causal relation to the world”¹⁶, says Madhva. What Madhva intends to say by this statement is that only an embodied being can enter into a causal relation with another being.

Madhva incorporates into his system all the mythological statements on the body of *Viṣṇu*, which are to be found in the *Vaiṣṇava* texts. *Viṣṇu* has an intellect. He has a mind. He had members and sub members. He is sweet smelling and luminous with knowledge etc¹⁷. Madhva gives his own interpretations to these mythological statements. For example, when certain texts

speak of *Viṣṇu* as formless, he gives the interpretation that they only mean that *Viṣṇu*'s body is completely different from material bodies. The body of *Viṣṇu* is not originated and hence eternal¹⁸. Positively, the body of *Viṣṇu* consists in nothing but his attributes. Madhva says that “Nārāyaṇa, whose body is nothing but the totality of his attributes.” Madhva does not accept the teaching that the spiritual souls and matter form the body of *Viṣṇu*. Only the infinite attributes of the Lord form his body. These attributes and the members of *Viṣṇu* are not distinct from each other or from *Viṣṇu*¹⁹.

4.3 The Attributes of *Viṣṇu*

In all his writings, one of the loved words of Madhva is Pūrṇa. In his opinion, *Viṣṇu* is the fullness, the ocean of all good qualities and he is devoid of any defects²⁰. *Nikhilapūrṇā-guṇadeham*, *Nirdoṣam*, *Sarvagūṇapūrṇa* etc are recurring phrases in Madhva to speak about *Viṣṇu*. In his view every word of *Śruti*, even every *varṇa* of the sacred texts primarily is about *Viṣṇu* and about his qualities²¹. There are certain statements in *Śruti* in which *Brahman* is termed *Kevala*, simple and *nirguṇa*²². The *Dvaitins* tell us that such words do not intend to teach the quality-less character of the absolute. In their interpretation,

Kevala merely means that *Viṣṇu* is unmixed with matter and the so called *nirguṇa śruti* texts proclaim that *Viṣṇu* is devoid of all material qualities like *sattvadiguṇas*²³.

Apart from these arguments from *Śruti*, Madhva also presents a few philosophical reflections on this matter. According to him, every object is individual, particular and endowed with attributes. Every true apprehension is an apprehension of an object endowed with qualities. The object as it exists and the apprehension of the object do manifest a correspondence to each other. In fact, if realities were attribute-less, unstructured, then all human conduct and inter relationship would come to a halt. Such being the general structure of our experience and of the realities experienced, it is quite clear and logical to deduce that the infinite *Viṣṇu* should be endowed with infinite qualities. It is also clear that an attribute-less absolute cannot be the implication of *Śruti*.

According to Madhva, one of the essential traits of *Viṣṇu* is his independence. From the Lord's power and independence we can argue about his defect-lessness and attributes. From experience we know that we are not full of qualities and not without defects, because we are not powerful enough to get what

we want and to devoid what we dislike. But in the case of *Viṣṇu* we do not find any extrinsic dependence or limitations of power²⁴. It is explicit that He must be defect-less and full of qualities. So *Dvaita Vedānta* declares that: “It is impossible to enumerate or speak of qualities of the Lord for they are innumerable and all the qualities declared or undeclared in *Śruti* are found in him”²⁵.

Viṣṇu alone is designated by *Dvaita Vedānta* as *Satyam*, *Jñānam*, and *ānantam*. *Viṣṇu* is called “Sat’ because he causes existence (*Sadbhāva*). Most probably what Madhva meant by it is that *Viṣṇu* is the cause of the origination of the universe²⁶. But when Jayatīrtha writes that *Viṣṇu* is called Sat, because they (realities) are dependent on him,²⁷ he seems to mean more than the appearance of things. Perhaps he was trying to point out a reality behind the origination-dissolution cycle and to establish an ontological dependence of things on *Viṣṇu*.

Vijñāna of *Viṣṇu* : *Dvaita Vedānta* argues that the omniscience of *Viṣṇu* is a clear teaching of *Śruti*²⁸. From the fact that he is the cause of the world, we know that he is conscious and omniscient. His form is that of unmixed knowledge²⁹. In the *Pramāṇalakṣaṇa*, *Viṣṇu*’s knowledge is presented as eternal. It

embraces the totality of beings, and it is totally independent. All other beings depend on *Viṣṇu*. Perfect clarity, distinctness and immediacy in their highest degree demarcate *Viṣṇu*'s knowledge. The knowledge of *Viṣṇu* is creative in nature and it creates the world. The world is called *Māyāmaya*, because it is produced by the knowledge of the Lord. According to *Dvaita*, during the time of *Pralaya*, the eternal *Vedic varṇas* form the object of *Viṣṇu*'s consciousness. The basic teaching of *Dvaita* that all consciousness is relational (related to an object) forces the *Dvaitins* to affirm that the Lord's consciousness would be empty at the time of the disappearance of the world and of all things, if the *Vedic varṇas* did not remain as its object³⁰. This doctrine clearly proves that *Viṣṇu*'s consciousness, though infinite and eternal has still the same essential structure as all other consciousness.

Ānanda of Viṣṇu: *Viṣṇu* is called endless (*ānanta*) because he is the fullness of bliss, because he is the plenitude of joy. The infinitude of *Viṣṇu* indicates the unlimited nature of his bliss. The Lord's qualities like greatness, perfection, supremacy and infinitude are expressed in *Dvaita* by the application of such terms "*pūrṇatva*", "*niḥśīmatva*" and "*Māhātmya*"³¹.

According to *Dvaita* Philosophy, *Viṣṇu* alone is called ‘*ānandamaya*’, not because he is a modification of bliss, nor because he presides over bliss, but because he is the abundance of bliss³². The suffix ‘*maya*’ expresses the nature of reality. So when we say that the Lord is *ānandamaya* it means that he is of the nature of bliss. He is perfect bliss. Madhva goes on to assert that the word ‘*pracura*’ can signify the nature of a thing. When we, for example say that the sun is ‘right abundant’, we mean to affirm that the sun is of the nature of luminosity. So also in the present case what is affirmed by the word is that *Viṣṇu* is of the nature of bliss³³. It is the characteristic of *Viṣṇu* alone to be bliss. All other beings from *Śrī* to the blade of grass enjoy only a drop of bliss³⁴.

Aiśvarya of *Viṣṇu* : In the *Pañcarātrās*, *aiśvarya* (lordship) is that quality through which the lord can produce the world independently of all other causes. In Madhva’s thinking *aiśvarya*, besides this earlier meaning, has got a new significance. It is the Lordship of the Lord which harmonizes in him those qualities, which to us appear as opposed to each other³⁵. Madhva explains this point in the following way: the lordship of *Viṣṇu* enables him to be at once unchangeable and active³⁶. He criticizes that

the *Advaitin* does not understand the lordship of *Viṣṇu*. In his opinion an *Advaitin* one-sidedly keeps the unchangeability of *Brahman* and rejects the real activity of the absolute Being. In Lord *Brahman*, there is no opposition (i.e. nothing is impossible in and to him)³⁷.

Once again this attribute is presented by Madhva as the reason for the Lord's use of different means or instruments in his work of producing the world³⁸. *Viṣṇu*'s lordship is connected with his omnipotence. He is known as *sarva-śaktimān*, *acintyaśaktimān* and *vicitraśaktimān*. His power is all embracing, varied and unthinkable. Along with these attributes we must mention also about the '*bala*' of the Lord, which makes it possible for him to produce the world without fatigue.

In fact by insisting on the Lordship and power of *Viṣṇu*, Madhva brings to our notice the fact that the Lord surpasses our logical thinking. What we think of as mutually exclusive, or opposing, and what appears to us as impossible is possible and in fact harmoniously existing in *Viṣṇu*. We cannot apply our categories to him purely and simply.

Viṣṇu is *nitya* and *sarvagata* (eternal and omnipresent) : In the *Kaṭh.Up.Bhāṣya* Madhva says that the world is eternal like an ever flowing stream (*Pravāhanitya*). But *Viṣṇu* is said to be deathless (*amṛtaḥ*)³⁹. *Viṣṇu* alone is primarily deathless. In the *BSMB*, *Viṣṇu* is said to be beyond the *nityatva* of other beings⁴⁰. *Viṣṇu* is omnipresent by one and the same form, just as the same sun is present in many objects⁴¹. This is possible because of the lordship of the Lord. He is the indwelling principle of all beings, the principal agent of all activities and the ruler of all. He is present even in the deepest hell, though he by no means suffers the pain of hell⁴². He is present in all beings and all beings are in him⁴³.

*Vyūhas*⁴⁴ : The *Vyūhas* do have a place in Madhva's system. But it does not occupy the central place in the thought of Madhva, as they do in the thought of *Pañcarātrās*. The *Vyūhas* in the *Pañcarātrās* are emanations of *Viṣṇu*. According to it, each succeeding emanation, except the first, originating from an anterior emanation, like one flame proceeding from another flame. Each *Vyūha* is *Viṣṇu* himself with all six attributes: knowledge (*Jñāna*), lordship (*aiśvarya*), ability (*śakti*), strength (*bala*), virility (*vīrya*) and splendour (*tejas*). Of these six qualities

only two become manifest in each of the four *Vyūhas*. The *Vyūhas* are named *Vāsudeva*, *Samkarṣaṇa*, *Pradyumna* and *Anirudha*. Each *Vyūha* has been endowed with a creative and moral activity.

The *Vyūhas* are only manifestations of *Viṣṇu* or forms of the absolute being. It does not multiply the number of *Viṣṇu*. There is only one *Viṣṇu*, and the same *Viṣṇu* appears in different forms in *Vyūhas*. All the various manifestations of *Viṣṇu* are equal to *Viṣṇu* in everything. There is no distinction between *Viṣṇu* and his manifestations. The absolute Lordship of *Viṣṇu* makes it possible for him to appear in many forms though he remains the same in all these manifestations. These points about *Vyūhas* are equally applicable to the *Avatāras* also.

The *Avatāras* (Descents of *Viṣṇu*) : The *Vyūhas* are manifestations of *Viṣṇu*. They are immediately concerned with the origination, support etc of the world. They are *Viṣṇu* himself at work in different cosmic tasks. The *Avatāras* are the manifestations of *Viṣṇu* in human or animal forms⁴⁵. They appear from age to age in the world in order to perform some particular function or other. About this manifestation Madhva writes as follows: “The Lord *Viṣṇu*, the supreme Being, though

one in himself is of many forms and is called by different names because of his Lordship.”⁴⁶

4.4 *Viṣṇu* and the Origination of the World

According to Madhva, innumerable Vedic passages affirm the fact that *Viṣṇu* alone is the cause of the production, support, and dissolution (*Sṛṣṭi*, *Sthiti* and *Samhāra*) of the universe⁴⁷. In his view point souls, matter, time, space and certain other realities are eternal and coeval with *Viṣṇu*. But all these realities are eternally dependent on *Viṣṇu*. “Substance, *Karma*, time, the essential nature of being and *Jīva*, all exist by his favour (*Viṣṇu*’s), in its absence they do not exist”⁴⁸. Madhva never says that the Lord causes all the beings to exist. The real origin of the universe, which means the *Sṛṣṭi* of everything is a result of the evolution of *Prakṛti*, and the union of souls with bodies. Madhva simply states that all these happen because of *Viṣṇu*. God does not produce realities out of nothing. Existing realities acquire a new state of being, a change in accordance with the dependence on the will of another (*Paradhīnaviśeṣāpti*)⁴⁹. The world as we experience it, opines Madhva, originates under the will of *Īśvara*. We can go a step further and interpret Madhva’s teaching about the notion of dependence in a more metaphysical sense.

In our daily experience we see causes acting upon certain materials and producing some effects. A weaver for example, produces a piece of cloth. But his action does not reach down to the spheres of smell, taste, etc., of the cloth. Much less his action produces the *dharma*, the quality aspects of smell and taste. The qualities of the cloth are simultaneously produced in the event of the production of the cloth. Madhva teaches that *Viṣṇu*'s causality is quite different from the action of ordinary causes. For example, *Viṣṇu* produces not merely water, but also the qualities of water and the very essence of these qualities. *Viṣṇu*'s greatness is to be sought not so much in the fact that he produces substances, but in the fact that besides his production, he controls and hence enjoys every quality of every substance⁵⁰.

4.5 The Knowability of God

Viṣṇu is not known by means of sense perception sense object contact is limited to the sphere of the sensible. Even the *sākṣin* can intuit only itself, its characteristics and the modifications of mind, space, time etc. The Absolute Being, which stands beyond the sphere of the sensible and outside the domain of the individual self, cannot be reached by sense-

perception. Madhva writes: “*Viṣṇu* cannot be reached by sense perception.”⁵¹

In the *VTV*., quoting the *Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa* Madhva says: “*Viṣṇu* cannot be apprehended by mere reasoning”⁵² Jayanta says that the words ‘mere’ (*kevala*) is added in order to sould that reasoning unaided by the sacred texts cannot reach *Viṣṇu*⁵³. In his last and most important work, the *A. V*, Madhva writes: ‘Reasoning cannot in any way make known the Lord of the world’⁵⁴.

Jayatīrtha comments “We can though reasoning neither prove the existence of a first cause, nor can we indicate that this first cause is God.”⁵⁵ The sacred texts declare, says Madhva, that the one who ignore the Vedas, does not know *Viṣṇu*, nor can one reach *Viṣṇu* by reasoning⁵⁶.

In each philosophical system epistemology is dealt with great importance. Each system has its own distinct theory of epistemology with which the various doctrines are established. The *Dvaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* accept the three sources of knowledge: Perception, inference and testimony. They accept the authority of the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* and doctrines also. The

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems accept the four sources of knowledge: perception, inference, comparison and verbal testimony. They do not admit the validity of *Pāñcarātra Āgamas*.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* or treatises are far too many. The *Āgamas* from which material has been drawn extensively by the *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas* for expounding the doctrines of the Goddess *Śrī*, *avatāra* and *Prapatti* are *Ahs.* and *L.T.* The other important topics which have been adopted by *Vaiṣṇavism* from the *Pāñcarātra* texts are: the six principle attributes of God, the mode of worship of God in the form of icon at temples as well as homes, the theory of *nityavibhūti* and *parampada* (divine abode) and the concept of *B.G.*

In general the theological aspects of *Vaiṣṇavism* have been greatly influenced by the *Pāñcarātra* system. The supreme Deity (*Paratattva*) in *Vaiṣṇavism* is designated as *Śrīyaḥ-pati* or *Viṣṇu* as inseparably related to Goddess *Śrī*. *Śrī* is the beloved consort of *Viṣṇu* (*Viṣṇu-pati*) and the divine couple together constitute the ultimate Reality. As *Viṣṇu-patni* Goddess is held in *Vaiṣṇavism* as inseparable from Her Lord at all times and in all states. The *VP* states that *Śrī* is *anapāyini* or inseparable.⁵⁷

The Sacred tradition and our Knowledge of *Viṣṇu* : Madhva's position on the knowability of *Viṣṇu* and the means to know him shows that the sacred texts or the 'Sacred Tradition' (*āgama*) is the primary means through which we come to know the Absolute Being. The other two means of knowledge, namely, sense perception and inference have only a subordinate and auxiliary role to play in our search for the knowledge of *Brahman*. The works which constitute the true tradition (*āgama*) fall into two essentially different groups: revelation (*Śruti*) and tradition (*Smṛti*). *Śruti* is 'non-personal' and eternal, whereas '*Smṛti*' is personal and non eternal. The four *Vedās*, the *Brahmaṇās* and the *Pañcarātra āgamas* and the *Upaniṣads* belong to the first group and the other works to the second.

Revelation (*śruti*) is Non-Personal (*apauruṣeya*) : The first characteristic of *Śruti* is that it is non-personal in its origin. This doctrine, with some modifications, is commonly accepted by the *Mīmāṃsa* and *Vedānta* schools. Adhering to this traditional doctrine, Madhva affirms that the *Vedās* have no speaker or author. He writes that "The *Vedās* are not the composition of anyone is evident by itself; for the author of the *Vedās* is unascertained."⁵⁸ Jayatīrtha tries to prove this point by means of

a syllogism. His argument is presented in the following way: the *Vedās* are non personal, because the author is unknown, just like ether⁵⁹. Now Jayatirtha himself raises an objection against this argument: Even though the author is unknown, still it does not necessarily mean that the *Vedās* have no author⁶⁰ Madhva also may have had a similar objection in mind when he wrote that: “since the author of the *Vedās* is unknown, it is unwarranted to postulate such an author”. At the same time he proceeds with the following argument: “On the analogy of worldly testimony (writings) we cannot argue that the Vedic testimony also must have had some personal author, because worldly testimony cannot be conceived of as authorless.”⁶¹ What Madhva means by this statement is as following: “Personal human testimony comes down to us as having an author, whereas the *Vedās* come down to us with the essential mark of ‘author-lessness’”⁶². No other testimony reaches us as authorless in such a continuous tradition. So, if statements was to be made by someone and were to be named Veda, it does not become equal to the *Vedās* as there is no continuous tradition to that effect⁶³.

Madhava tries to establish the non-personal character of *Vedās* by the help of another argument also which he seems to

have taken from the positions of *Mīmāṃsakas*⁶⁴ He writes that: “It cannot be argued that there can be no text which is non-personal because in the absence of a non-personal authority, *dharma* which is admitted by all the schools will go unproved.”⁶⁵ *Dharma* is supersensible reality which cannot be either immediately perceived or inferred by us. In order to know this reality we need a third and sure means of knowledge, namely non-personal testimony. If any one denies the reality of *dharma* and *adharma*, he has no right to be called a teacher of philosophical truth. Such a person does not help the world by his teaching; on the contrary, he spreads mutual hatred and murder⁶⁶. Since he denies the final liberation, he has no motive (purpose) for helping the world⁶⁷.

Madhva states that *dharma* and *adharma* cannot be known by means of personal testimony, because persons are liable to ignorance and deceptiveness⁶⁸. Jayatirtha informs us that Madhva by taking this position is pointing out that the testimony of the Buddha, Kapila etc., cannot establish with certainty *dharma* and *adharma*, since they have such defects as ignorance and deceptiveness⁶⁹. The absolutely certain knowledge of *dharma* and *adharma* call for the absolutely certain source of

knowledge. Such a source can only be a non-personal testimony. Madhva here seems to imply that the moral law that rules the world and our own destiny cannot possess eternal and unconditional validity, if it were to be made a temporal decree even by God. The moral law is absolutely and universally binding. As a matter of fact, we know the various facets of moral law from the Vedic prescriptions. Neither *pratyakṣa*, external or internal, nor our trust in the perception of *Yogins*, nor inference can offer the knowledge of *dharma*, precisely because it is ‘supra-sensible’. At the same time, Madhva seems to be conscious that ‘*dharma*’ not merely pertains to the domain of *Śruti*, but also to the consciousness of all men. The universal moral consciousness cannot be founded on individual insights or on certain particular individuals. As far as the *Dvaitins* are concerned, such universality necessarily demands an absolute and universal source of *dhārmic* knowledge.

In the light of these arguments, opines some scholars in the voice of objection that if we should accept that the *Vedās* are the testimony of an omniscient being, say, God, or of his *Avataras* (e.g., the Buddha) then we can eliminate the possibility of ignorance and deceptiveness.

To this serious objection Madhva has this answer: “It is not right to postulate omniscient beings from the authorless nature of *vedas*. Omniscience is not a matter of experience and hence how can we legitimately postulate the existence of such omniscient beings? Even if we accept that omniscient persons exist, still how do we know that such beings have no intention to deceive others? Moreover, how do we know that an omniscient and non-deceiving person is the author of the Vedic testimony?”⁷⁰. Madhva, by posing these questions seems to think that if any one who asserts that śruti is the testimony of an omniscient person, and then one is caught in a chain of excessive postulation⁷¹. Madhva strongly presents his arguments by explaining the following points. The Buddha, according to Madhva, is an Avatara of *Viṣṇu*. This means that the Buddha is in all things identical with *Viṣṇu*. The Buddha therefore is omniscient and devoid of all evil passions. Still he can and does deceive others in order to save true knowledge from the wicked. By simulated actions the Buddha and other *Avataras* of *Viṣṇu*, deceive the wicked souls and keep them bound to their false knowledge⁷², lest they, by the study of the true scriptures come to know the truth and thus reach liberation.

Viṣṇu, the omniscient being could not have composed the *Vedās* as men compose a book by means of gradual achievement of order and step by step progress to a conclusion. Nor could he compose the *Vedās* at every age recalling to his mind the prior models destroyed at the time of ‘*praḷaya*’. His omniscience and the actual presence of all reality to his mind, contradict such a view. Nor could *Viṣṇu* be made a mere reciter of the *Vedās* at every new *uga* for that will make the *Vedās* independent of him.

So, Madhva thinks that the *Vedās* are neither human nor divine compositions. They have no author in whatever sense this notion is applied. The ultimate reason why Madhva has accepted this Mīmāṃsā view on śruti is to be sought in Madhva’s position on the self validity of knowledge. If the *Vedās* were personal (human or divine) then their validity would depend on something extrinsic to the *Vedās* viz., the authority of the speaker. This will lead us inevitably to the defect of infinite regress⁷³. But at the same time Madhva is aware of the fact that the Mīmāṃsā type of “śruti-non-personalism” is incompatible with his belief in the absoluteness of *Viṣṇu*. The Pūrvamīmāṃsās are atheists. For them, the *Vedās* exist without

beginning and end. The Vedās, *Karma*, and *dharma* constitute a sort of substitute- Absolute for them. But in the system of Madhva, the non-personal and eternal *Vedās* can constitute a threat to the supremacy of *Viṣṇu*. This means that Madhva could not accept without modification the Mīmāṃsā view of the non-personalism of *Śruti*. In the following paragraph this study briefly examine how Madhva tried to modify the Mīmāṃsā position in order to make it consonant with his system.

In his *Tattvasaṃkhyāna*, Madhva writes that the *Vedās* belong to the group of non-independent, eternal, non-conscious reality. So the *Vedās* are somehow dependent on *Viṣṇu*, like all the other realities in this world. Precisely in what way *śruti* is dependent on *Viṣṇu* is explained by Madhva. A citation from the *Brahma-Pūraṇa* quoted by Madhva in his *VTV*, may throw some light on this point. There he writes that “All the *Vedās* are eternal and in their eternal form subsist in the mind of *Viṣṇu*. In each creation, they are spoken out by him alone in the self- same form and in the same order, with the same letters and the same mode of utterance and not otherwise. Hence, they are *śruti*, i.e. heard by all. They were heard by the sages in previous lives through the grace of *Viṣṇu*. They manifest themselves to those

sages in the present life, in parts and not in their entirety. Since the *Vedās* were perceived by Hari and were heard by others, they are called śrtyaḥ by the ancients. The allusions to their origin are to be interpreted in terms of their manifestations. Just as the creation of the individual soul is taken figuratively, the origin of *Śruti* also should be similarly understood.”⁷⁴

Though the above quoted passage is clear about the point that it tries to explain and does not call for any comment, still it is better to point out some particular features which distinguish Madva’s teaching from that of Mīmāṃsaka doctrine about the nature of Vedas. These features also help us to understand better Madhva’s doctrine on God.

For the *Mīmāṃsakas*, the *Vedās* are eternal and absolute i.e., independent. For Madhva, the *Vedās* are non-personal but non-independent. The eternity of the *Vedās* is conceived in different ways by the *Mīmāṃsakas* and Madhva. These differences are mainly due to their conceptions about time. Each school has its own concept of time. For the *Mīmāṃsakas*, time is beginning- less and endless straight line. So the eternity of the *Vedās* means beginning-lessness and endlessness. For Madhvas, time is cyclic and all reality except *Viṣṇu* and *Lakṣmī* are subject

to this cyclic time with its periodic originations and dissolutions. This implies that the *Vedās* too not manifested during the time of dissolution and are manifested once again in the same form and order in the next ‘creation’ of the world. Thus, as we speak of the origination and dissolution of the individual soul, so we may speak of the origination of the *Vedās* too. Like the souls, the *Vedās* are coexistent with *Viṣṇu*, and like them, dependent on *Viṣṇu* too. *Viṣṇu* is the cause of their manifestation, and at the time of dissolution they are absorbed into him. Madhva’s statements about the *Vedās* that they are always perceived by God, or that the omniscient God always intuits the syllables and words of the *Vedās*, should not be taken to mean that the *Vedās* are in the mind of *Viṣṇu*, as in the mind of ‘a speaker’. According to Madhva, *Viṣṇu* is not the “author” of the *Vedās*, but the *Vedās* form the object of the intuition of *Viṣṇu*. *Viṣṇu* being omniscient and eternal intuits the *Vedās* eternally and fully.

But at least in a restricted sense we can say that *Viṣṇu* is the speaker of the *Vedās*. *Viṣṇu*, at the beginning of each creation gives out or manifest the not yet manifested *Vedās* in the same form and order in which they existed during the

previous cycle. Once *Viṣṇu* has made the *Vedās* manifest at the beginning of a world cycle, the sages who possess all the required qualities and who are favored by *Viṣṇu* intuit the *Vedās* and they hand down to us these intuited *Vedās*.⁷⁵

In spite of its non-personal and unchanging character of the *Vedās*, Madhva still speaks of a ‘sort of history of the *Vedās*’. According to him, during the first golden and *dharmic* age of the world, the *Vedās* formed just one whole. But with the passage of time and especially in the second world cycle, the pure *Vedic* knowledge become distorted. *Viṣṇu* himself at the request of the gods then descended into this world as *Vyāsa*, restored the *Vedās*, and divided the one whole Veda into 4 *Vedās*, and these into 24, 101, 1012 etc. This division of the *Vedās* was necessary because man was no more capable of learning the whole of the *Veda* as one. Hence the *Vedās* as we have them were arranged and handed down to us by *Vyāsa*.⁷⁶

Śruti is Eternal (*nitya*) : According to *Mīmāṃsā* and all *Vedānta* schools, the *Vedās* are eternal because the syllable, words and the things meant by them (*artha*) and the meaning-relationships inherent in them are eternal. This view is opposed to the *Naiyāyika*’s position about *Vedās* which says that the

syllables and words are non-eternal and that the word-meaning relationship is to be explained by human or divine convention.

Madhva adopts the following position regarding the word-meaning relationship. “It cannot be maintained, says Madhva that *varṇās* originate just when they are pronounced. Such a view would contradict the fact of recognition which say, ‘This is the same sound which was uttered before,’ otherwise the fact of recognition such as ‘this is that Devadatta’ would have to be stigmatized as illusory.”⁷⁷ What Madhva tries to defend here is not the mere similarity of syllables and hence of words composed of syllables, but their identity. The syllables of the word ‘*nadi*’ e.g., which were uttered by a man 2000 years ago and are uttered by a man today are not just similar, but they are identically the same, though they have different and passing external “sounds” involved in it. The word ‘*nadi*’ means ‘river’ not because of any convention, but because of an eternal connection between the word and the meaning. Madhva’s argument for this assertion is that otherwise river could mean mountain or fire could mean water. He argues that even during *pralaya*, the *varṇās* remain identically the same, for they are eternally the object of *Viṣṇu*’s consciousness.⁷⁸ Since at the time

of dissolution the finite spirits are not manifested, the *Vedic varṇās* do not teach the Supreme Being to any one. But they are in themselves the praise of the Lord. He alone is eternally the “Seer” and the “Content” of the *Vedās*.⁷⁹

The *Vedās* composed of syllables, and of words which are combinations of them must be eternal because these constituents are eternal. This position about the eternal nature of the *Vedās* was criticized as meaningless. The critique points out that in such a case every testimony must be eternal. Madhva answer this difficulty in the following way: All know that words haphazardly placed cannot give us any meaning. Without the right order of words we cannot derive any meaning from the words. In ordinary human testimony, we arrange the eternal words in a meaningful manner. What is presented in personal testimony or composition is the rational, meaningful and progressive arrangement of words. When we say that the *Vedās* are non-personal we not only mean that the words and their meanings are eternal, but also the order of syllables (words) in the *Vedās* is “non-personal”, though the *Vedās* are eternally dependent on *Viṣṇu* and are wholly perceived by his thought⁸⁰.

It is interesting to note the implications of the positions taken up about *Vedās* as indicating its non-personal (*apauruṣeya*) and the eternal character. As far as *Dvaita* is concerned what exists eternally are the *varṇās* in their mutual relations. In fact the *varṇās* are the ultimate and permanent elements of *Vedic* and non-*vedic* language. They are omnipresent substances. They do not merely reveal the words alone but each *varṇa* manifests *Viṣṇu*. Above all they reveal the unique content of *Śruti*, *Viṣṇu*, who is the order of syllable and words. The content of *Śruti* always remains the same. So the *varṇās* and the order of the *Vedās* too remain the same. *Viṣṇu* manifests the ordered *Vedās* to the world so that the devotees might come to know him. The *varṇās* however, are inert, non-conscious realities. Only through the intervention of thought or intelligence can they become meaningful language. So also the order of *varṇās* and words pertain to the sphere of intelligence. In this sense the “meanings” of *varṇa* words and the order of the Vedic works are eternally thought by *Viṣṇu* they are manifested in time by his will and are sustained by him⁸¹.

Śruti is self- valid: In Madhva’s philosophy, all true knowledge is self -valid and carries within it the certitude of its validity. The

self-validity of *Śruti* is no more than an application to it of this general epistemological principle adopted by Madhva. The Validity of testimony in general is the necessary condition on which Madhva builds the theory of the self-validity of the *Vedās*. Against those who wanted to reduce language or testimony to inference, Madhva argues that verbal testimony can never be reduced, either to immediate sense perception or to inference. *Pratyakṣa* is the immediate knowledge of an object through sense object contact. *Anumāna*, on the other hand is a mediate knowledge, whose basis is the knowledge of ‘*vyāpti*’ i.e., invariable concomitance of the *probandum* and *probans*. The essential nature of verbal testimony is different from that of these two sources of knowledge. Verbal testimony gives us a mediate knowledge i.e., through the medium of the knowledge of words (uttered by a reliable person), we come to know something. Hence it is clear that verbal testimony is irreducible to either *pratyakṣa* or *anumāna*. It must be accepted as a third means or source of knowledge⁸².

Śabda like *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* is an *anupramāṇa*. The only *kevala pramāṇa*, immediately self-valid and self-validation source of knowledge is the *sākṣin* (internal witness or

the knowing self). So the cognitions derived from the *anupramāṇas* become evident and are validated by the “knowing self.” Madhva puts it in the following way: “It is by the perception of *sākṣin* that the truth of the *pramāṇas* is recognized. Since the *sākṣin* is self-luminous, there is no defect of infinite regress”⁸³ . So the truth of the *Vedās* is also then ultimately guaranteed by the *sākṣin*. As it has already been said in this study, the universal and necessary laws of *dharma* are revealed to us by the non-personal *Vedās*. At the same time the *Dvaitins* are convinced that all men have the consciousness of the exigencies of the moral order. It also perceives the universal, eternal and necessary content of *dharma* revealed in the *Vedās* and its accord with the moral exigencies experienced by all. In fact only the *sākṣin* is capable of grasping the notions of totality, universality and absolute necessity. In this sense the *āgamapramāṇa* (*Śruti* as a source of knowledge) resembles *pratyakṣa*. This is the reason why Madhva says: “The authority of *āgama* is intrinsic to itself, being similar to that of perception.”⁸⁴

Śruti is a part or type of verbal testimony with the two characteristics mentioned above: eternity and non-personalism. At this stage a further question may be asked whether *Śruti* as a

source of knowledge has a proper object of its own. Every source of knowledge must have its proper object. Madhva and Jayatīrtha agree with the *Mīmāṃsakas* in saying that the *Vedās* have a proper and specific object of their own, viz., *dharma* (and all the supersensible realities⁸⁵). *Dharma* can be known only through *Śruti*. In ordinary human testimony, the aptitude and truthfulness and other conditions affecting the speaker, the matter communicated, and the speech itself must necessarily be taken into consideration, in order to be certain of the validity of the testimony. In the case of *Śruti*, nothing extrinsic to it has to be taken into consideration in order to establish its validity. *Śruti* is non-personal, the syllables and words in it, their meanings and their innate power to signify something, are all eternal. So *Śruti* is valid in itself. Its authority and validity are intrinsic to it.

4. 6 *Viṣṇu* is only the Efficient Cause and not the Material Cause of the World

After the detailed analysis in the previous section about *Viṣṇu*'s relation to the nature of Vedas as it is highlighted in Madhva's philosophy, this section of the thesis attempts to see the Causal nature of *Viṣṇu* with reference to the world in *Dvaita* system. We see that in all the *Vedānta* schools, *Brahman*, the

Absolute Being is considered as the cause of the origination of this universe. This position is based on the interpretation of the very second *sūtra* of the *BS*, which explicitly teaches this fact. But in some schools like *Bheda-abheda* of Bhāskara and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja, *Brahman* is presented both the efficient and the material cause of the world. In fact the ‘causal terminology’ has an emanationistic meaning both in the *Vedāntic* and *Pañcarātra* traditions. Madhva himself is utilizing this terminology and hence we may get the impression that for him too, *Brahman* is the material cause of the world. This impression is strengthened by the fact that he quotes many creation myths which are openly emanationistic in character.

In spite of these facts mentioned above we must admit that Madhva is in no way an emanationist in his interpretations about the cause of the world. He explicitly rejects the position that *Viṣṇu* can be the material cause of the world. In this view he differs from the main *Vedāntic* and *Pañcarātra* traditions. The *Bheda-abheda* theory of Bhāskara and others for example, accept the reality of the world. But they believe that the world rest on *Brahman* as its support. *Brahman* is the stuff out of which the whole universe successively springs forth. There is a periodic

evolution of the world out of *Brahman* and a re-absorption into it. This theory is based on the *Upaniṣadic* texts like: “*Brahman* alone is real without a second he desired, let me be many”⁸⁶, which affirms that ultimately *Brahman* alone is real and that it transformed itself into ‘the many’. *Bheda-abheda* theory argues that just as the pot is different and non-different from the clay simultaneously, so is the world is different and non-different from *Brahman*. When the scriptures say that *prakṛti* is the material cause of the world, the *Bhedābheda*vādins understand this term as *Brahman*, in as much as it is the supportive cause of the world. According to them, *Brahman* is not merely the supportive cause of the world but also the efficient cause. There are different powers in *Brahman*. Its “power of being” (*sat-śakti*) is the supportive cause of the world whereas its “spiritual thought-power” (*cit-śakti*) is the principle of immutability and the source of efficient causality.

Madhva refutes the view that *Brahman* can be the supportive cause of the world and that the world is a modification of the Supreme Being. He strongly suggests that in our reflections on the Supreme Lord we should never lose sight of a truth. He writes that: “Whatever is not in keeping with the

majesty of the Lord, what is opposed to it is to be rejected. What is opposed to his lordship is evidently unfit for him. All proofs and statements should be understood in consonance with his sovereignty”⁸⁷. In *BSMB*, Madhva says that change is possible only where there is (inner) division. Experience testifies that changeable entities are ‘divided’ entities. Now *Viṣṇu* is unchangeable because he is undivided (he has no parts) in his nature⁸⁸. In the same work Madhva speaks of change as a type of dependence. All supportive causes are dependent causes. *Viṣṇu* is absolutely independent and hence he is unchangeable. Madhva continues his argument that he (*Viṣṇu*), the unchangeable merely effects the changeable. Though he is the power in those being endowed with power, still he is devoid of all parts.⁸⁹ So *Viṣṇu*, the undivided and the absolutely independent being, who is eternally perfect and unchangeable, cannot be the material cause of the world, because the very notion of material causality carries within it the ideas of change and dependence. Madhva writes that: “The term *prakṛti* does not signify *Brahman* considered as the material cause. The eternal *Ātman*, the eternal *Hari*, is without change, pure, whose knowledge and power are always of the same nature whose form is felicity, devoid of modification, imperishable, pure without suffering, old age, death he is not the

universe, but its author he is without birth this (*Harī*) is termed the Supreme. He who is without modification, incomparable, unchangeably of the same essence, indestructible, this being is termed by the believers in the *Vedās* as *Brahman* and *Paramātmān*. These words of *Śruti* and the *purāṇas* affirm the fact that *Janārdhana* does not know any modifications or change”⁹⁰.

The discussion on *Viṣṇu* as the material causality of the world is to be found in *A. V* also: ‘the non-conscious being can never be the product of a conscious being nor the conscious being the product of a non-conscious being’. ⁹¹It is clear from this text that, for Madhva, the gulf between spirit and matter is unbridgeable and hence the view that the Supreme Spirit could evolve into this world is absurd. If matter can be an evolute of the spirit, then logically we should accept the materialist position that consciousness is the evolute of matter⁹².

There are arguments against the position of Madhva with reference to consider *Viṣṇu* as the material cause of the world. They argue that there is nothing inconsistent in saying that a part of *Viṣṇu* be the material cause of the world, though the other parts remain unchanged. To this critical argument Madhva

replies: *Viṣṇu* has no parts. But he immediately adds that: that part of *Brahman* which remains unchanged, that alone we designate as our *Īśvara* (God).⁹³ According to Madhva, the parents are not the material cause of the child. Nor is the spider the material cause of the thread it emits. The food taken by the parents constitutes the partial material cause of the matter (body) of the child. So also the thread is produced out of the food of the spider.⁹⁴ So Madhva does not admit that even a part of *Viṣṇu* can be the material cause of the whole universe. Jayatirtha summarizes the whole discussion very clearly in his NSu. He writes that: “There are two completely different beings. One is the unchangeable efficient cause (*nimitta*) of the world. The other is the changeable (*pariṇāmi*) material cause of the world”.⁹⁵

4.7 *Viṣṇu* is the Supporter and Ruler of the world.

According to Madhva, *Viṣṇu* is the source of the origin, support, government and destruction of the universe. And he is the source of ignorance, bondage and liberation of souls. Jayatīrtha says that: “Concerning souls, origination signifies the production of the body, *sthiti* means the permanence of the soul in the bodily state, *niyati* (government) stands for the binding of the soul by means of injunctions and prohibitions. As regards the

immortal gods, their origin consists in their appearance, their *sthiti* in the absence of death, their *niyati* in their subordination to the commands of *Viṣṇu*’⁹⁶. The support of the world seems to mean then the permanence of the world in its manifest state. *Viṣṇu* exercises the supporting causality (*dhāraṇatvaṃ*) in order to keep all manifest realities in that state. The imperishable Lord supports all beings by being present in them in many ways. When the Lord does not wish to support the world, puts it down, then it disappears. In spite of such graphic language, Madhva knows that it is the command of the Lord that supports all things. It is the independent and omnipotent will of the Lord which is the source and support of all⁹⁷.

Viṣṇu is present in all beings not merely in general manner. He is present in the heart and at the root of hearing faculty. He is present in the eye and all the senses. Those persons endowed with real knowledge know that all actions are from *Viṣṇu*.⁹⁸

Purpose of creation : *Viṣṇu* is absolute bliss. His desires are eternally fulfilled. So from his work of producing the world he cannot derive any profit or utility. According to Madhva, *Īśvara* engages in the work of creating the world out of play (*līla*) and

not for the sake of gaining even a particle of profit⁹⁹. The *līla* of *Viṣṇu* is rooted in his bliss. Hence Madhva could say that the world originated from the bliss of *Viṣṇu*. The divine play is nothing but an overflow of divine bliss. But it should not be thought that God is in need of play or that he derives some pleasure from such a play. The free Lord acts because of his blissful nature and his creative act is nothing more than an act of his will.¹⁰⁰

*Creation and the use of Sādhana*s : The Lord used various means like *Prakṛti*, space and time in his work of creation. God creates men in accordance with their *Karma*. These means and *Karma* seem to bind the freedom of God.

It is true that *Viṣṇu* makes use of these means or instruments in his work of creation. But their power to be means or instruments come from God¹⁰¹. The very determination that such and such realities would be used as means of creation come from the will of *Hari*, the Lord.¹⁰² The freedom of *Viṣṇu* is such that he could have created the world with or without these instruments.¹⁰³ God uses *Prakṛti* as the material cause of the world, just as a man though capable of walking on foot with no aid, uses a stick to lean on out of sport. By the fact that God uses

many instruments and means in his creative work, he manifests his glory and majesty.

Karma does not bind the Lord. The very existence of *Karma* depends on the Supreme Being. It is true that God takes the *Karma* of the *Jīvas* into consideration while creating the world. But the *Dvaitins* place *Karma* under the sovereign will of the Lord¹⁰⁴. In his freedom God creates the world in manifold ways by applying the means and instruments of creation. The world of man created by God is called ‘*bhūloka*’ (earth). It forms the part of a complex system of worlds. Below this world there are seven nether worlds where the enemies of the gods (*asuras*) live. Below them there are hells of various kinds in which the wicked and the sinful inhabit. Above the earth, there are seven upper-worlds, the highest of which is called *Vaikuṇṭa*, that is, the world of *Viṣṇu*. If we leave out of consideration the various hells, then our world may be said to lie in the middle of the world-system.

Nature of the Soul : In connection with his discussions on God and his creation of the world it is important to say briefly about Madhva’s views on the nature of the soul. His discussions on the nature of the soul also support his standpoints about the nature of

God. Madhva describes the soul as a spiritual and active reality. In the *Sāṅkhya* system, ‘*puruṣa*’ (soul) is inactive. For Śaṅkara, there is only one conscious being, namely, *Brahman*, which is the absolute and the only reality in this universe and which is identical with man’s true self. For Madhva, there is one infinite, conscious being, *Viṣṇu*, and dependent on *Viṣṇu*, there are numberless finite spiritual beings or souls.¹⁰⁵ In the Rāmānuja system, the souls form the body of *Viṣṇu*. The God-soul relationship is expressed in the terms of the soul-body relationship.¹⁰⁶ In Madhivism, God and soul are completely distinct from each other.

The best way to understand the nature of soul in Madhivism is to examine its relationship to *Viṣṇu*. Madhva tries to express the nature of the soul through the metaphor of reflection. The soul, says Madhva, is a reflection of *Viṣṇu*. The relation between *Viṣṇu* and soul is the relation of the reflected object to its reflection (*bimbapratibimbabhāva*). In his *BSMB*,¹⁰⁷ Madhva quotes the *Paiṅgiśruti* which states that reflections are of two kinds: reflection through a medium or conditioned reflection and reflection which does not need a medium or unconditioned reflection. Reflection which calls for a medium may be

illustrated by the example of the reflection of our face on the surface of a mirror. Medium-less reflection, according to Madhva, is exemplified in the phenomenon of the rainbow, which is the medium-less reflection of the sun. A conditioned reflection is destroyed when the medium is destroyed, or when the contact between the reflected object and the medium is removed ¹⁰⁸. The souls according to the teaching of the sacred tradition, which are not eternal and indestructible cannot be the reflections of *Viṣṇu*. So they are medium-less reflection.

Here the soul is the reflection, not of a material thing but of God himself. God being omnipresent, his contact with the medium of reflection cannot be removed or destroyed ¹⁰⁹. The medium on which *Viṣṇu* reflects himself is essential in nature because the soul is essentially spiritual. Jayatīrtha writes: ‘How can something be at once the medium and the reflection Such a thing does not fall within the sphere of experience. The answer is that in spiritual beings this is possible precisely because they are conscious and because they are eternal.’¹¹⁰

4.8 The Bondage and Liberation

According to *Dvaita*, both bondage and liberation are due to God's will. God puts the *Jīvas* under bondage in order to help them to undertake the effort for the spiritual progress and attain their true nature which is blissful. Before the creation the *Jīvas* are in a dormant state. Transmigration is an opportunity given to them by God to achieve their spiritual emancipation. Thus in *Dvaita* view point, bondage is primarily due to the will of God and it is his will that is only capable of removing it.

According to *Dvaita*, Liberation is marked by complete absence of all traces of pain, evil and suffering, coupled with a positive enjoyment of inherent spiritual *ānanda*¹¹¹. The bliss has no reference to material world. It is attained by the realization of the true nature of the soul. Madhva maintains that the realization of the truth does not mean the absolution of the plurality of the world but only a removal of the false sense of separateness and independence¹¹². There is no question of transference of values because bliss obtained in liberation is not an external possession of souls but an essential characteristic of their being that manifests completely in liberation. These liberated souls are not dissolved in the Absolute. They retain their individual

consciousness as liberated and rest in the full knowledge of their deliverance from all misery.

The enjoyment of the liberated souls is of three kinds: *Śālokya*, *Sāmīpyas*, *Sārūpya* and *Sāyūjya*. *Sāyūjya* means the entrance of individual souls into the body of God and their identification with the enjoyment of God in His own body. *Sārūpya-mokṣa*, which is a species of *Sāyūjya-mokṣa*, means the enjoyment of same powers that God possesses, which can only be done by entering into the body of God and by identifying oneself with the particular powers of God. Only deities or the gods deserve to have this kind of liberation they can at their will come out of God as well as remain separate from Him. *Śālokya mokṣa* means residence in heaven and being there with God to experience satisfaction and enjoyment by the continuous sight of Him. *Sāmīpya-mokṣa* means continuous residence near God such as is enjoyed by the sages. *Sārūpya-mokṣa* is enjoyed by God's attendants, who have outward forms similar to that which God possesses. The recognition of the difference among the liberated souls in the state of enjoyment and other privileges is one of the cardinal doctrines of Madhva's system, because, if it

is not acknowledged, then the dualistic that all individual souls are always different from one another would fall.

Means of Liberation : Madhva says that liberation is not possible without the divine grace. He writes that: “Liberation is not obtained without the grace of *Viṣṇu*, by whose grace alone one is liberated from *samsāra* which is full of sufferings. *Nārāyaṇa* should be the sole and supreme object of contemplation for those who desire to be liberated from the snare of their actions.”¹¹³

Madhva has given a unique place to divine grace in his system in making it the ultimate cause of self-realization and God-realization. Soul also has to exert to propitiate the deity. This can only be done by *Bhakti*, that is, devotion. *Bhakti* is defined by Jayatīrtha in the *Nyāyasudha* as follows: “*Bhakti* is a constant flow of intense love for God that is based on knowledge of attributes of God who is limitless, infinite, auspicious and devoid of any fault. It is impregnable by any amount of impediments and transcends the love of our own selves, our kith and kin, cherished longings etc¹¹⁴.”

Such *Bhakti* is necessary to manifest the natural and intrinsic relationship of *Pratibimbatva* of the soul to God, which

lies dormant in the state of bondage. Regarding other means of liberation Madhva makes it clear that disinterested action carried on in a spirit of devotion to God is a powerful incentive to the acquisition of direct realization which is the highest and only means of liberation. *Karma*, *dhyāna* and others are its accessories only¹¹⁵.

In *Dvaita* philosophy, the attainment of release is guaranteed through only Divine grace. One has naturally to think of the means of earning it. The *śāstras* describe them as leading to one another in the following order: freedom from worldly attachment (*Vairāgya*), devotion to God. (*Bhakti*), *Śravaṇa* (study), *Manana* (reflection), *Nididhyāsana* (meditation), and *sākṣātkāra* (direct realization).

Dispassion or *Vairāgya* is the first step and primary requisite of a true aspirant. The spirit of detachment and freedom from passions is indeed the most valuable discipline and preparation for a life of genuine godliness and spirituality. It constitutes the essence of spiritual life.¹¹⁶

Dispassion as the first step, then comes *śravaṇa* (listening) and *manana* (pondering) which lead to *sākṣātkāra* (direct realization). Vyāsātīrtha observes, “*Śravaṇa* by dispelling

ignorance, *manana* by removing doubts and misapprehension are subsidiary to *nididhyāsana* (meditation) which results in direct realization, that is obtained by definite knowledge of Highest Reality.¹¹⁷

Śravaṇa is defined as the acquisition of the sense of the sacred texts under the instruction of competent teachers. *Manana* is the systematic employment of the canons of textual interpretation and logical examination with a view to arriving at a firm conviction that the final interpretation of the *śāstras* thus arrived at is alone correct and unimpeachable one. *Manana* confirms the true import of the *śāstras*. Then comes the *nididhyāsana* that leads to direct realization of God.

NOTES

- ¹ Madhva (1238-1317 AD) is the founder of Dvaita system. He was other known as *Pūrṇaprajña*, *Ānandatīrtha* etc.,
Madhva has written thirty-seven works in all. They include:
A. *Prakaraṇa-granthas*
(1) *Pramāṇalakṣaṇa* (2) *Māyāvādakhaṇḍana* (3) *Upādhikhaṇḍana*,
(4) *Prapañcamithyātva-numānakhaṇḍana* (5) *Tattvasaṃkhyāna*,
(6) *Tattvaviveka*, (7) *Tattvodyota*, (8) *Kathālakṣaṇa*, (9) *Karmanirṇaya*,
(10) *Viṣṇutattvavirṇaya*.
B. *Vāda-granthas*
(1) *Anuvyākhyāna*, (2) *Nyāyavivaraṇa*
C. *Siddhānta-granthas*
(1) *Gītābhāṣya*, (2) *Gītātāparyanirṇaya*, (3) *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*,
(4) *Bhāratatātparyanirṇaya*, (5) *Bhāgavatātātparyanirṇaya*, (6) *Daśopaniṣad-
bhāṣyas*, (total 10) (7) *Rghāṣya*, (8) *Aṇubhāṣya*, (9) *Kṛṣṇāmṛtamahārṇava*,
(10) *Tantrasāra*, (11) *Sadācārasmṛti*, (12) *Dvādaśastotra*,
(13) *Yamakabhārata*, (14) *Yatipraṇaṇakalpa*, (15) *Jayantīnirṇaya*,
(16) *Nakṣastuti*.
² *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Dogbert D. Runes, Routledge, New York, 1955, p.84
³ M.Hiriyanna, *Essentials of Indian Philosophy*, p.91.
⁴ VTV.,no.325
प्रकृष्टः पञ्चविधोभेदः प्रपञ्चः ।
⁵ Cfr., Ibid.no,127
⁶ Cfr., Ibid.no.120
न च धर्मप्रतियोग्यपेक्षया भेदस्य स्वरूपत्वं ...स्वरूपस्यैव तथात्वात् ।
⁷ Ibid.,no.129
सामान्यतः सर्ववैलक्षण्ये ज्ञाता एव घटत्वादिज्ञानम् ।
⁸ *On the anti-Śaivism of the Vaiṣṇava-Purāṇās*, of P.Hacker.Prahlada, Vol.,II.pp.166,184 etc.
⁹ BS.,II.2.37-41
¹⁰ BSMB.,II.3.37-41
¹¹ *The Śivagāmas teach that Siva is bodiless*. S.Dasgupta : *A History of Indian Philosophy* Vol.V.p.22
¹² BSMB.,II.2.38
¹³ Ibid
¹⁴ Tat.Di.,p.219
¹⁵ BSMB.,II.2.39
¹⁶ Ibid., II.2.38

- ¹⁷ Ibid., II 2.41
बुद्धिमान् मनोमान्
- ¹⁸ VTV.,no.453
उत्पत्ति वासुदेवस्य प्रादुर्भावो न न चापरः
- ¹⁹ A.V.,I.1.1.
नारायणं निखिलपूर्णगुणौकदेहं । The word ‘eka’ (one or only) is not to be understand numerically i.e., as one but as “only”. What Jayatīrtha means to say is that Viṣṇu’s only body is composed of his attributes.
- ²⁰ Ibid., नारायणं निखिलपूर्णगुणदेहं निदौषम् ...VTV. No.1, नारायणं सदा वन्दे निर्दोषाशेषसत्गुणम्। Madhva’s writings abound in words and phrases denoting the infinite, limitless perfections of Viṣṇu. “Nārāyaṇa surpasses all in excellence and is untouched by defects” . “He is filled infinite perfections” (guṇa pūrṇa). “He has infinite perfections” (ananta guṇa) (Ibid.9) He is utterly perfect with ultimate qualities (amita guṇa BSMB.I.2.12). All the good qualities we usually predicate of things are found in the most exalted form in Viṣṇu (BSMB 2.3.29) Whoever meditates properly on Viṣṇu should contemplate his plenitude and infinitude and his distinction from all other beings (VTV.437 and 455). Like all the Vaiṣṇavas , Madhva too insists on the ‘ubhayalingatva’ i.e., the two forms of ascription, freedom from all defects and the possession of all positive qualities of Viṣṇu. So the idea that Viṣṇu is guṇa-pūrṇa is central to the teaching of Madhva.
- ²¹ A.V.,I.1.145.
तस्मैशात्रेण जिज्ञास्यां अस्मदीयं गुणार्णवम्।
- ²² Śve.Up.,VI.II.,
एको देवः सर्वं भूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापि सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूतादिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्चेति ।
- ²³ The word ‘aham’ in the Upaniṣadic sentence “ahambrahmāsmi, is interpreted to mean; aheyam i.e., that which is free from evil or he who is not to be shunned. So the whole sentence expresses the defectless nature of Brahman VTV., 267. निर्गुणशब्दः प्राकृतगुणनिषेधात्मकः।
- ²⁴ A.V.,I.1.100
हितक्रियादिदोषं च वक्ष्यति एव स्वयं प्रभुः च तेनैव निषिद्धं प्रभुना स्वयम्।
- ²⁵ BSMB.,II.1.38.
- ²⁶ A.V.,I.1.190
- ²⁷ N.Su.,p.60,
सत्भावो जन्म ... ततः सत् सत्त्वावं जन्म यापयेत्, प्रापयेत् स्वव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वं
यस्मात् तस्मात् ब्रह्मसत्यं कथ्यते, सकलजगत् जन्मकारणत्वं सत्यशब्दार्थम् ।।
- ²⁸ Muṇ.Up.,II.2.7.
यः सर्वज्ञः स सर्ववित् ...

- ²⁹ BSMB., II.2.41 Viṣṇu is ‘jñānabhaḥ’
Ibid., III.2.16. ‘Vijñānānandamātratat’
Ibid., IV.2.29 Viṣṇu is ‘tejorūpaḥ’
- ³⁰ VTV., No. 263,
प्रज्ञाविनिर्मितं यस्मात् अतो मायामयं जगत् ।।
- ³¹ A.V.,III.4.188.
- ³² Ibid.,I.1.197.
अनन्तत्वं सुनिर्णीतं पूर्णनन्दो हिनाल्पके ।
- ³³ Ibid.,I.1.179.
प्राचुर्यार्थश्च मयदः सर्वत्र प्रतिपादिताः । BSMB. I.1.13
- ³⁴ BSMB., I.2.15.
- ³⁵ Ibid., I.1.15. Madhva explains what he means ‘aiśvarya’ : “The guṇa aiśvarya is that activity based on in dependence; unimpeded activity. According to *L.T.* this is isentical with what is called ‘icchā’-will”. VP. also speaks of the ‘aiśvarya’ of Viṣṇu.
- ³⁶ Kat.Up.,Bh.p.15.
ऐश्वर्यात् भगवान् विष्णो विरुद्धं गातयति असौ ।
- ³⁷ GBM.,II.23-25
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ BSMB., II.3.1.7.
Viṣṇu is said to be beyond ‘nityatva’ (Jīva is ‘upacāreṇa’ nitya) Viṣṇu is the support of the ‘nityatva, of other beings.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., III.1.17. Viṣṇu is present in the hearts of all beings.
- ⁴² Ibid., III. 1.17. Viṣṇu is present in Svarga, bhūme, naraka and tamasi etc.
- ⁴³ Īś.Up.Bh., 1 and 6
सर्वं परमात्मानं सर्वं च परमात्मनि ।
- ⁴⁴ The detailed discussion on Vyūha theory is given by O Schrader in his Pañcarātra Saṃhita. What I offer here.
- ⁴⁵ The Avatāra —doctrine and the avatāra myths existed and developed side by side and they have influenced each other. The myths connected with the various avatars. The basis of this (avatāra) doctrine is Bhagavad Gīta.IV.6.9.
- ⁴⁶ BSMB.,III.2.11.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.,I.1.2., In his commentary on BS I.1.2, In his commentary on BS.I.1.2 Madhva refers to R̥g. V.X.125.1-8, Ibid.I.164, Tai.Up.III.I. “That , verily, when beings here are born, that by which when born they live, that into which on decreasing they enter”. (Trans. R.E.Hume, p.290)
- ⁴⁸ These lines from the Bhāgavata Purāṇa are often quoted by Madhva.

- ⁴⁹ “Parādhīnaviśeṣāpti” —means the acquiring of a new trait or complexion that depends on (the will of) an “other” (God) (*Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, BNK., Sharma.p.227)
- ⁵⁰ GBM.,VII.I
- ⁵¹ VTV., no.3.
न अक्षजेन न केनतित्...
- ⁵² VTV., No.2.p.2.
तर्ककेवलो वेदाध्यानुकूल्यरहितः ।
- ⁵³ Ibid
- ⁵⁴ AV., I.1.116.
तका ज्ञापयितु शक्तो.. कथञ्चन ।
- ⁵⁵ N.Su.
ईशितारं जगत्कर्तारं कथञ्चन सामान्यतो विशेषतश्च ।
- ⁵⁶ A.V.,1.4.58
न युक्तमीशितुः किञ्चिदीशत्वस्य विरोधि यत् यदीशत्वविरोधिः
स्यात् तदेवायुक्तं ईशत्वस्य अविरोधेन योजयित्व अखिलाः प्रमाः ।
See also N.Su.,1.4.68
यदि पुनः कारणस्वरूपानुगममन्तरेण विकारिविकार भावोभ्युपगम्येत,
तथा चेतनोप्यचेतनविकारः कि नाभ्युपगन्तव्यः ।
- ⁵⁷ V.P., 1.8.17
विष्णोः श्रीरनपायिनी ।
- ⁵⁸ VTV., no14
- ⁵⁹ VTV., Ti.p.26 vedo ‘pauruseyo’ pramitakartṛkatvat gaganavat
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., Ti.p.26
- ⁶¹ Ibid., no.17
- ⁶² Ibid.
- ⁶³ Ibid., no.18
- ⁶⁴ VTV., no.6
न च पौरुषेयं वाक्यं एव नास्तीति वाच्यं
तदभावे सर्वसमयाभिमतधर्माध्यसिद्धेः ।
- ⁶⁵ VTV., no.6
- ⁶⁶ VTV., no.7-8
In AV.1.1.68 Madhva writes : In is necessary infact, to accept that the Veda is eternal, for otherwise dharma and so on cannot be established. (na hi dharmādisiddh). Here Madhva seems to argue to the eternity and non personal nature of ‘Sruti’ not merely from the fact of the super-sensible nature of dharma but also from its eternal, universal and obligatory character.

- 67 VTV., no.10
The whole point is explained by Jayathirtha in VTV. Ti.pp 13-14, Cf also
AV., 1.1.71.
- 68 Ibid., no.11
- 69 VTV., Ti.P.24
वीतरागिणां अपि ज्ञानाङ्गुरसंरक्षणानां चलादिना
प्रतिवादिप्रतारणस्य सर्वैरङ्गीकृतत्वात् ।।
- 70 VTV., no.12
न च तदर्थत्वेन सर्वज्ञः कल्प्येत...चेति कल्पनागौरवप्राप्तेः ।।
- 71 Ibid., No.12
- 72 Ibid., Ti. p24
- 73 Ibid., nos.21-23
- 74 VTV., no.41
- 75 VTV., no.19-20
“If he, who has no less than twenty out of the thirty two merits, who is
given to penance, and who knows many Vedas, sees, by the power of his
intuitive vision, any text as forming part the Veda, it has to be admitted as
such.” The seers are not the authors of the Vedic texts they are however, the
seers of and witnesses to the Vedas. “Without them we would not be the
possessors of the Saving wisdom.”
- 76 BSMB.,1.1.1, AV 1.1.1-3, *Introduction to BGM* etc.
- 77 VTV.,no.29
- 78 VTV.,no.41, AV III.4.188
- 79 A.V., III.4.188
- 80 VTV., 41;AV.III.4.188
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 A.V., 1.1.63.
On the problem of the self validity of Sruti: *Ślokovarttika* pp.26, 35, 46 etc.,
Verbal testimony is irreducible to perception or inference.
- 83 A.V., I.1.66
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 A.V., I.1.68
- 86 Tai.Up., II.6
- 87 A.V.,I.4.58
- 88 BSMB., II.3.7
विभक्तत्वाच्च विकारित्वं युक्तं विकारिण एव लोके विभक्ता दृश्यन्ते ।
- 89 Ibid., II.3.9
परतन्त्रविशेषो हि विकार इति कीर्तितः अविकारोऽपि भगवान् सर्वशक्तित्व हेतुतः ।

- 90 A.V., I.4.58.
न युक्तमीशितुं किञ्चिदीश्वरस्य विरोधि यत् यदीशत्वविरोधि स्यात् तदेवायुक्तं ईशत्वस्य
अविरोधेन योजयित्व अखिला : प्रमाः ।
- 91 Ibid., 4.68
- 92 N.Su., I.4.68
यदि पुनः कारणस्वरूपामुगम् अनन्तरेण विकारिविकारभावोऽभ्युपगम्येत
तदा चेतनोऽप्यचेतनविकारः किं नाभ्युपगन्तव्यः ।
- 93 A.V., I.4.71
भागेन परिणामश्चेत् भागयोर्भेद एव हि ।
- 94 A.V., I.4.66
- 95 N.Su.,
परस्परं अत्यन्ताभिन्ने द्वे वस्तुनी तत्रैकं निर्विकारं जगन्निमित्तं एव ।।
- 96 VTV.Ti., 14 pp.342-343
जीवानां सर्गं देहसृष्टिः स्थिति देहाधिष्ठानेन अवस्थानं
कष्ये मरणं यति विधिनिषदाभयं बन्धः ।
- 97 BSMB., I.3.10.
- 98 Mun.Up.Bh., III.1.4.
BSMB., II.2.3
- 99 BSMB., II.1.34.
- 100 Ibid., I.1.14.
Bliss is the root of Viṣṇu's activity Madhva has not discussed in detail the
'end' Viṣṇu intends for the effects. The general orientation of his system
seems to indicate the solution we have offered here.
- 101 Ibid., II.1.15.
स्वतन्त्रबहुसाधना सृष्टि लोके दृष्टा , नैवं ब्रह्मण
स्वरूपसामर्थ्यात् एव तस्य सृष्टिः
- 102 Ibid., II.1.15.
- 103 Ibid.
- 104 Ibid., III.2.42.
- 105 VTV., no.387
- 106 BSMB II. 3. 42
- 107 Ibid, II. 3.50
- 108 GBM., II.18
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 BSMB., III.4.33.
सर्वदुःखनिवृत्तिश्च ज्ञानिनो निश्चितैव हि उपास्यया
कर्माभिश्च भक्त्या च आनन्ताचित्रता ।

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- ¹¹² BSMB.,I.4.19
यो हि ब्रह्मक्षत्रादिकं जगदात्मनोऽन्यत्र स्वातन्त्र्येण लब्धसद्भावं
पश्यति तं मित्यादर्शिनं जगत् पराकरोति ।
- ¹¹³ VTV.,no.105,
नारायणप्रसादं ऋते न मोक्षः ।
- ¹¹⁴ N.Su.,p.17.
परमेश्वरभक्तिर्नाम निरवाधिकानन्तानवद्यकल्याणगुणत्वज्ञानपूर्वकः
स्वात्मात्मीयसमस्तवस्तुभ्योऽप्यगुणाधिकोऽन्तराय
सहस्रेणाप्यप्रतिबद्ध निरन्तरप्रेमप्रवाहः
- ¹¹⁵ N.Mr.,III.9.
तस्मान्मोक्षाय श्रावणादिसाध्यनिदिध्यासनजन्मसाक्षात्कारेण
ईश्वरः प्रसन्नीकरणीयः ।
- ¹¹⁶ Mun.Up., 1.2.13...
शान्तो दान्तः उपरतस्थितिक्षुसमाहितो भूत्वा ...
परीक्ष्या लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्रह्मणे निवैदमायात् ।
- ¹¹⁷ N.Mr., III.9.
श्रवणस्याज्ञाननिवृत्तिद्वारा मननस्य तु संशयः विपर्यय निवृत्तिद्वारा परोक्षतत्त्व-
निश्चयसाध्ये साक्षात्कारफलके निदिध्यासने अहाता सिद्धा ।

CHAPTER V

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN
THE THEISTIC POSITIONS IN NYĀYA-
VAIŚEṢIKA, VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND
DVAITA

This chapter is an attempt to analyze comparatively the theistic positions held by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* schools. In the previous chapters of this thesis we have elaborately probed into the stand points of each of these philosophical systems concerning theism. It is obvious from our study that each of these schools had developed very strong positions about the existence and nature of God separately as the inherent part of their system as a whole. In this chapter an attempt is made to compare the theistic stand points of these systems as the culmination of this thesis. For this purpose this study selects certain points from each of the theistic positions held in these schools and compares them after a very close scrutiny about them.

5.1 God the Creator-A Comparison

As the initial point of discussion on comparison this study takes up the theme of God, the creator in philosophical systems of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*. It seems that all of these schools accept God as the creator of the universe. At the same time they have differences of opinion regarding the nature of God as the cause of creation. *Nyāya* and *Dvaita* hold that God is merely an efficient cause in creation.

5.1.1 God as Efficient Cause : *Dvaita*'s Position

Madhva affirms that *Viṣṇu* and *Viṣṇu* alone is the cause of the production, support and dissolution or destruction (*śṛṣṭi*, *sthiti* and *saṃhāra*) of the universe. The very first verse of the A.V. says: “he from whom the origination, support etc. of the universe is, is *Viṣṇu*.¹ Bādarāyaṇā's assertion that he from whom the origination etc. clearly points to *Viṣṇu* as the cause of the universe.² From *Viṣṇu* proceeds ‘origination, support, dissolution, government, knowledge, ignorance, bondage and finally release’. This is the definition of *Viṣṇu*. According to Madhva, innumerable *Vedic* passages reveal this truth. He establishes his position by trying to refute the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* school of thought. As is well-known, the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* are *ātomists*. For them the world is finally the product of the *ātoms* of the four basic elements which join together in different proportion at the will (*iccha*) of *Īśvara*.³ From the long and complicated refutation of this school, we intend to pick out only a few points which throw light on Madhva's concept of the Absolute Being.⁴

Since the theory is neither taught by nor in accordance with ‘*Śruti*’, claims Madhva, it is not worth for our

consideration.⁵ Mere reliance on logic (*tarka*), as is the case with the *Vaiśeṣika*, can lead one only to misfortune. More philosophically Madhva asks: “You say that the *ātom*s come together at the will of *Īśvara*. Now, is this will of *Īśvara* eternal or non-eternal? If eternal, then why were the *ātom*s inactive during the time of dissolution (*pralaya*)? If they were inactive, then why are they active now? If on the contrary, you say that the will of *Īśvara* is non-eternal, then what is it that actuates the ‘will’ (*iccha*) of *Īśvara*? In this case too, since the will of God is not there, the *ātom*s must remain inactive. So, in both cases the origination of the universe remains inexplicable.”⁶

The presuppositions which underlie this objection are very revealing. *Īśvara*, the eternal cause, must of necessity be eternally active, i.e., eternally producing an effect. This way of looking at divine causality necessarily does away with the possibility of a ‘creation in time’.

But there are criticisms that the very objection against the atomists undermine the *Dvaita* system itself. *Dvaita* too admits the eternity of the divine will and the inactive nature of primary matter and the souls during the period of dissolution. Madhva, however, rejects this objection with the remark that *Īśvara* as

taught in the *Vedas* is omnipotent and so everything is possible.⁷ Moreover, Madhva says that differentiation is inherent in time. One and the same time (*kāla*) has in itself a ‘creation-time’ (*Śṛṣṭi-kāla*). *Īśvara* produces the world and at the time of destruction (*saṃhāra-kāla*) he destroys the world.⁸ So Madhva posits the creation-destruction difference (*śṛṣṭi-saṃhāra*) in time and not in *Īśvara*, though he admits that this is dependent on *Viṣṇu*. At each special time, we have to admit special moments in the will of *Viṣṇu*. At ‘creation time’ there is the ‘special will’ of producing the world and at the time of destruction the special will of destroying the world.⁹ In short, Madhva thinks that if we admit the omnipotence of God and an inherent, natural differentiation in time with the corresponding ‘special moments’ in the will of *Viṣṇu*, the above mentioned objection could be easily solved.

Of course this solution in no way answers the difficulty. Still it is to the credit of Madhva that he has seen the difficulty of reconciling the eternal and active will of *Viṣṇu*, and the world’s temporality and changeableness, which are dependent on this will. Still it is unfortunate that freedom as auto-determination is

not dealt with in Madhva either in this connection or in the discussion on the ‘*svātantrya*’ of *Īśvara*.

We can see that in all the *Vedānta* schools, *Brahman*, the Absolute Being is designated as the cause of the origination of this universe because the very second sutra of the *Brahma-sutras* explicitly teaches us so. But in some schools like *Bhedābheda* of Bhāskara and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja, *Brahman* is both efficient and the material cause of the world. In fact the ‘causal terminology’ has an emanationistic meaning both in the *Vedāntic* and *Pañcarātra* traditions. Madhva himself is utilizing this terminology in his *Dvaita* system and hence we may get the impression that for him too *Brahman* is the material cause of the world. This impression is strengthened by the fact that he quotes many creation myths which are openly emanationistic.

In spite of these two facts we must admit that Madhva is in no way an emanationist. He explicitly rejects the position that *Viṣṇu* can be the material cause of the world. For him *Viṣṇu* is the efficient cause of creation. In this he differs from the main *Vedāntic* and *Pañcarātra* traditions. The *Bheda-abheda* theory of Bhāskara and others, for example accept the reality of the world. But they believe that the world rests on *Brahman* as its support.

Brahman is the stuff from out of which the whole universe successively springs forth. There is a periodic evolution of the world from out of *Brahman* and re-absorption into it. This theory is based on the *Upaniṣādic* texts like: “*Brahman* alone is real without a second; he desired, let me be many”¹⁰ which affirm that ultimately *Brahman* alone is real and that it transformed itself into “the many”. Just as the pot is different and non-different from the clay, so is the world is different and non-different from *Brahman*. When the scriptures say that *Prakṛti* is the material cause of the world, the *Bhedābheda*vādins understand the term as *Brahman* in as much as it is the supportive cause of the world. According to them, *Brahman* is not merely the supportive cause of the world, but also the efficient cause. There are different powers in *Brahman*. Its “power of being” (*sat-śakti*) is the supportive cause of the world whereas its “spiritual thought-power” (*cit-śakti*) is the principle of immutability and the source of efficient causality.

Madhva naturally refutes the view that *Brahman* i.e., *Viṣṇu* himself can be the material cause of the world and that the world is a modification of the Supreme Being. In our reflections on the Supreme Lord, he argues that we should never lose sight

of a truth. “Whatever is not in keeping with the majesty of the Lord, what is opposed to it is to be rejected. What is opposed to his lordship is evidently unfit for him. All proofs and statements should be understood in consonance with his sovereignty.”¹¹

In *BSMB* Madhva says that change is possible only where there is (inner) division. Experience testifies that changeable entities are ‘divided’ entities. Now *Viṣṇu* is unchangeable because he is undivided (he has no parts).¹² A little later in the same work Madhva speaks of change as a type of dependence. All supportive causes are dependent causes. *Viṣṇu* is absolutely independent and hence he is unchangeable. Madhva continues that he (*Viṣṇu*), the unchangeable effects the changeable. Though he is the power in those being endowed with power still he is devoid of all parts.¹³ So *Viṣṇu*, the undivided and the absolutely independent being, who is eternally perfect and unchangeable, cannot be the material cause of the world, because the very notion of material causality carries within it the idea of change and dependence. “The term *Prakṛti* does not signify *Brahman* considered as the material cause. The eternal *Ātman*, the eternal *Hari*, is without change, pure, whose knowledge and power are always of the same nature whose form

is felicity, devoid of modification, imperishable, pure without suffering, old age, death. He is not the universe, but its author; he is without birth; this (*Harī*) is termed the Supreme. He who is without modification, incomparable, unchangeably of the same essence, indestructible is termed by the believers in the *Vedas* as *Brahman* and *Paramātmān*. These words of *Śruti* and the *Purāṇas* affirm that Janārdana does not know any modifications or change”¹⁴.

The causal nature of *Viṣṇu* is explained in *A.V* as follows: ‘the non-conscious being could never be the product of a conscious being nor the conscious being the product of a non-conscious being’.¹⁵ It is clear from this text that, for Madhva, the gulf between spirit and matter is unbridgeable and hence the view that the Supreme Spirit could evolve into this world is absurd. If matter can be an evolute of the spirit, then logically we should accept the materialist position that consciousness is the evolute of matter.¹⁶

We may then ask the following question: cannot a part of *Viṣṇu* be the material cause of the world, though the other parts remain unchanged. To this Madhva replies that *Viṣṇu* has no parts. But he immediately adds that that part of *Brahman*

which remains unchanged, that alone we designate as our *Īśvara* (God)¹⁷. So Madhva does not admit that even a part of *Viṣṇu* can be the material cause of the whole universe. Jayatīrtha summarizes the whole discussion very clearly in his *N.Su.*: “There are two completely different beings. One is the unchangeable efficient cause (*nimitta*) of the world. The other is the changeable (*pariṇāmi*) material cause of the world”. According to Madhva, the parents are not the material cause of the child. Nor is the spider the material cause of the thread it emits. The food taken by the parents constitutes the partial material cause of the matter (body) of the child. So also the thread is produced out of the food of the spider.¹⁸ Madhva explicitly states that *Viṣṇu* is the efficient cause of creation.

5.1.2 God as Efficient Cause: *Nyāya*’s Position

The *Naiyāyikas* put forward many arguments for the existence of God, of which the principal arguments are the causal or cosmologico-teleological argument, the moral argument and the argument from the authority of the *Vedas*. It is in the causal or cosmologico-teleological argument that *Naiyāyikas* present God as the creator and the Designer of the World. They argue that the world is of the nature of the effect. So it must have an

efficient cause. In this sense God is the efficient cause of the world¹⁹.

Their inference about God as the efficient cause may be stated thus: Every effect must have an agent e.g., a jar. The world is an effect. Therefore it must have an agent. This agent is God.

Just as a jar is produced by a potter, so the world is produced by a God. This argument involves the following assumptions. Every effect must have a cause, every effect must have an intelligent agent, the world is an effect, it must be produced by an intelligent agent viz., God. The *Nyāya* maintains that God is the efficient cause or agent of the world. The *ātoms* of the earth, water, light and air are its material cause. They are co-eternal with God. They are neither created nor destroyed by God. Composite substances that are made of parts and possess intermediate magnitude are of the nature of effects.²⁰ Ether, space, time and the self are ubiquitous and devoid of parts. So they are not effects. They are eternal. The *ātoms* of earth, water, fire and air are indivisible and infinitesimal substances. The mind also is *ātoomic*. So the *ātoms* and minds are not effects. They are eternal. Only composite substances of medium size are effects. They are produced by an intelligent agent out of their component elements. A pot consists of parts and possess intermediate

magnitude are of the nature of effects. So it is an effect. It is produced by an intelligent agent, a potter out of clay. Its efficient cause is an intelligent person who has direct knowledge of the material. He desires to produce an effect and takes the effort or volition to produce it. Agency involves direct knowledge of the material, desire to realize an end and the will to realize it.²¹ Cognition, desire, and volition are closely related to one another. Cognition gives rise to desire. Desire gives rise to volition. Volition produces motion.

The world is not infinite. It is of the nature of an effect. It is produced by an intelligent agent, viz., God who has direct knowledge of the material cause or *ātoms*. He desires to create the world and has the volition to do so. God as the efficient cause of the world has knowledge, desire, and volition requisite to creation.

The *Naiyāyika* regards God as the efficient cause of the world. God is not its material cause. He does not evolve the world out of nothing by a mere fiat of will. He fashions the world out of the pre-existing *ātoms* in time and space. He combines and arranges them in a particular order. He gives them unity, order and harmony. He does not create the *ātoms* of earth, water, light, and air. He does not create ether time, and space. He combines

the *ātoms* into diads, diads into triads, triads into quartrads, quartrads into more complex things.

The combination of the *ātoms* is brought about by the agency of God. They are inactive by nature. They are devoid of motion. The earlier *Naiyāyikas* ascribed the motion of the *ātoms* to the unseen principle. Thus the diad is produced by the conjunction of two atoms. Two *ātoms* are its material or inherent cause and their conjunction is its non-material or non-inherent cause. The unseen principle is its efficient cause. But the later *Naiyāyikas* ascribed the motion of the *ātoms* to the will of God . The *ātoms* are unintelligent. They are inactive in their selves. They can move only when they are supervised by an intelligent agent like an axe.²²

Motion of an unconscious thing is known to be so due to the activity of an intelligent agent which directs it. Individual souls have finite knowledge. They cannot perceive the atoms. They are incapable of producing motion in them. They cannot combine them into diads, triads, and gross material objects. They are endowed with limited knowledge and limited power of will. They cannot produce mountains, rivers, trees, and the like. They are produced without their effort .God is omniscient and omnipotent. He perceives the *ātoms* .He creates motion in them

by His will even as the individual soul creates action in the body by its will. God creates motion voluntarily and brings about conjunction between two *āatoms* through it. He voluntarily creates motion and brings diads into conjunction with one another and produces a triad. God is the cause of the motion of the unconscious atoms, which are the objects of His will.

Fortuitous combination of the *āatoms* with one another cannot produce the world, which is characterized by unity, order and harmony. It is the intelligent will of God that creates motion in the *āatoms* and combines them in an intelligent order. Causality in the world is God's will for causality. God is the efficient cause of the world as an intelligent agent endowed with knowledge, desire, and volition.²³

He has direct knowledge of the atoms. He desires to create the world out of them, and will to do so. The world is produced by the agency of one omniscient God who is different from individual souls like us, who cannot produce this manifold immeasurable world which produces various pleasures and pains in an infinite number of individual souls²⁴. The arrangement of mountains, rivers, and other natural objects cannot be accidental. It is similar to the arrangements of jars, clothes and other things

produced by human agents. Whatever objects are arranged in an order are produced by an intelligent agent.²⁵

Just as the arrangement of jars and the like is produced by the will and activity of intelligent human agents, so the arrangement of mountains and other natural objects is produced by the will and activity of God who is omniscient and omnipotent. Their arrangement is designed, willed, and produced by God. These explanations rightly state that in *Nyāya* view God discharges His function as the efficient cause of the world.²⁶

5.1.3 God as Efficient, Material and Co-operative Causes:

Viśiṣṭādvaita's Position

According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, God functions in creation as efficient, material and co-operative causes. *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* reject the positions of *Nyāya* and *Dvaita* about the role of God in creation i.e. God as efficient cause only. *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* argue that God is not only the efficient cause but the material cause and co-operative cause as well. God becomes the material cause of the universe by virtue of His nature as qualified by sentient and non-sentient in their subtle state. He becomes the efficient cause by virtue of His nature as qualified by His will and also the co-operative cause by virtue of His nature as the immanent in time.

“ईश्वरः सूक्ष्मचिदचिद्विविशिष्टवेषेण जगदुवादानकारणं भवति, सङ्कल्पविशिष्टवेषेण निमित्तकारणं भवति, कालाद्यन्तर्यामिवेषेण सहकारिकारणं च।”²⁷ The aforesaid three aspects in *Viśiṣṭādvaitin*’s position about God’s role as creator can be described in the following way: The *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta* postulates two types of creation known as *samaṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* or creation of the aggregate universe and *vyāṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* or creation of the universe of space and time with all its diversity. In the first stage, *Brahman* or *Īśvara* as the creator of the universe causes the evolution of *Prakṛti* through various stages up to the five gross elements. At the completion of this stage the second kind of creation starts by mixing up the five physical elements in certain proportion. This is technically called *pañcīkaraṇa* or quintuplication of the five elements.

According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, from the philosophical point of view *Brahman* is the primary cause of the universe. This basic point in *Viśiṣṭādvaita*’s position about God as the creator is complex in nature. The complexity of such a position is analyzed in this section by identifying three modes of causes. Generally speaking *Vedānta* holds three types of causes that are needed for the production of an effect. One is known as *upādāna kāraṇa* or the material out of which a product is brought out; the second is

nimitta kāraṇa or the intelligent agent to bring forth the product and third is *sahakāri kāraṇa* or the accessories needed to produce an object. If *Brahman* is regarded as the primary cause of the universe as the *Upaniṣads* declare, then the question arises: is it the material cause or is it merely an instrumental cause or is it both? *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* consider God as *upādanakāraṇa* (material cause), *nimittakāraṇa* (intelligent cause) and *sahakārikāraṇa* (accessory cause). They highlight one of these causes and attribute it to God as the cause of creation demanded by the context of explanation about creation.

According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, the mere *svarūpa* of *Brahman* cannot become the material cause of the universe since that would affect the immutable character of *Brahman*. It is *Brahman* as organically related to the *cit* (individual souls) and *acit* (the cosmos matter) in their subtle state that constitutes the material cause of the universe. In the state of dissolution, the cosmic matter as well as the individual selves exists in *Brahman* in an un-manifest form as devoid of name and form. When creation takes place, they are unfolded and given the name and form. That is to say that when *Brahman*, which exists prior to creation with *cit* and *acit* in a state of differentiation wills to be ‘many’ as the *Ch.Up.* states about it. The same becomes *Brahman* with *cit* and

acit in a state of differentiation with infinity of distinctions of name and form. What actually evolves or undergoes modification is the cit and *acit* but not *Brahman* directly.

According to the theory of causality adopted by *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, cause and effect are different states of the same substance. The effect is not a new product that comes into existence from what does not already exist, as the *Naiyāyikas* believe (*asat-kārya-vāda*). It exists in the causal state in an unmanifest form and the same assumes a different state after causation. If we take the example of clay and pot, the lump of clay that is the cause becomes an effect when it is changed into pot. Thus the cause and effect are two different states of the same one substance. *Upādānatva* or material causality consists in the association of an entity with a different state. *Brahman* as associated with cit and *acit* in their subtle states serves as the *upādāna-kāraṇa* for the universe.

Rāmānuja presents God as the efficient cause of creation. In order to explain this position of Rāmānuja the important points of difference between the *Sāṅkhya* conception of *Prakṛti* and Rāmānuja's conception of it might be noted. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are the constitutive elements of *Prakṛti* in *Sāṅkhya*,

but here they are presented merely as qualities of *Prakṛti*. In *Sāṅkhya*, these three elements can never remain separate; but here *Nityavibhūti* is made up of pure *Sattva*. In *Sāṅkhya*, *Prakṛti* is infinite, but here *Prakṛti* is limited from above by *Nityavibhūti*. In *Sāṅkhya*, *Prakṛti* is independent, but here *Prakṛti* is absolutely dependent on God and is inseparable from Him. It is His mode or His body. It is also called His *Līlāvibhūti* because creation is His sport. Change is not apparent but real. His view is known as *Brahmapariṇāma-vāda* because according to it the entire universe including the material world and the individual soul is a real modification of *Brahman*. Though Rāmānuja, like *Sāṅkhya*, believes in *Prakṛti*, yet unlike it, he makes *Prakṛti* absolutely dependent on God and controlled by God from within just as the body is controlled from within by the soul. The world of matter and the souls, as stated above, are as real as God. Independence, according to Rāmānuja, does not constitute the essence of reality. A thing in order to be real need not be independent. The material world and the souls are absolutely real though they are absolutely dependent on God.

God is the immanent principle of *Prakṛti* as well as of individual souls. The exact significance of representing them as his body is that they are sustained by him and are altogether

subject to his control and entirely sub serves his purposes. Or, as Rāmānuja puts it, God exists for himself, while eventually matter and souls exist for his sake. The same observation, we may state by the way, applies to the individual soul and its body also. In other words, God together with the souls and matter is an organic whole, just as the soul with its physical body is an organic unity. The implication is that the relation of body and soul is more intimate than mere *aprthak-siddhi*, which may be found in inorganic wholes also like a rock with its colour or form where there is no question, for instance, of the one controlling the other²⁸. God, like the individual soul, is of the essence of the intelligence, self-revealing and knows objects through *dharmabhūtajñāna*. But unlike it, he is free from all defects and possessed of all auspicious qualities. He is omniscient omnipresent and omnipotent. He is also all-merciful and it is through his grace that man attains salvation. He is the author of the universe. But he is not merely its efficient cause as in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*. He is also represented as its source or material cause since there is nothing external to him from which it could come into being. Thus God here, as *Brahman* in *Advaita*, is the sole cause of the universe. As cause in this comprehensive sense, God has as his body the souls and matter in their un-manifest

form and as effect; he has them as his body in their manifest and diversified form. This should not be regarded as implying that he is affected by the evil, viz., suffering and change found in the world. For evil belongs specifically to the souls or matter and does not so much touch the Supreme who is absolutely distinct from them.

We have seen that God is presented as material cause in *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. Rāmānuja repeatedly asserts that matter and spirits are parts of God. But He does not hold that God undergoes modification with the change of matter. God is not subject to the miseries from which the spirit suffers. According to Rāmānuja, the imperfections and defects that we find in the world does not affect God. In order to present the separability of God from the world Rāmānuja applies different similes in his philosophy of God. He employs the imagery of part and whole, and the body and soul to show the separate existence of God from the world. According to Rāmānuja, God is the soul of which the material objects and spirits compose the body, just as the soul controls matter and spirit. Rāmānuja conceives God as the *antaryāmin* or regulator of the universe from within. With the help of different analogies Rāmānuja tries to explain away the charge of God's being subject to misery and imperfections. As the soul is not

affected by the bodily changes, states Rāmānuja, so God is not affected by the changes in the universe. He remains beyond them or transcends them. These explanations of Rāmānuja obviously show that God creates the world and regulates it as the efficient cause of it.

As Rāmānuja presents God as both material and efficient cause of creation, similarly God is presented in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy as co-operative cause as well. In Rāmānuja's philosophy matter and souls are attributes (*viśeṣa*), modes (*prakāra*), or parts (*aṃśa*) of *Brahman*. They are accessory to Him. There are changes in his parts and modes. But He remains unchanged in them. There is no change in the Divine substance. Conscious and unconscious modes constitute His body. He is their soul. There is an *apr̥thaksiddhi* between them. They cannot exist apart from Him. They are controlled by him. He is identity-in-difference. He harmonizes the plurality of modes within His unity. He co-operates with soul and matter to maintain the different phases of creation. Though these phases do not affect Him He is active in creation. In this sense, besides being the material and efficient causes, God is presented in Rāmānuja's philosophy as co-operative cause as well.

5.2 The Nature of God in Creation

Previous section of this chapter discussed the theme of God as the creator. Though there are differences of opinion among *Naiyāyikas*, *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* and *Dvaitins* about the mode of causes in creation, they unanimously agree that God is the cause of creation. In this section we discuss the nature of God who actively participates in creation either as material and efficient and supportive causes. *Naiyāyikas* hold that God functions as efficient cause in creation without having a body. To *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* and *Dvaitins* God is endowed with a body and participates in creation as different causes.

5.2.1 Bodiless God as Efficient Cause of Creation: *Nyāya*'s Position

The atheist who argued against the *Naiyāyika*'s position about God as the creator urges that if God is the creator of the world, He should have a body. A jar is made by a potter with bodily action. But in *Nyāya* philosophy God has no body. So He cannot be the creator of the world. The *Nyāya* replies that an effect is produced by an agent endowed with knowledge, desire and will. In the case of an effect produced by a human agent, the will is expressed in bodily activity. But in the case of the world

the Divine Will may not be expressed in bodily activity. Or, the *ātom*s may serve as the body of God. God produces activity or motion in the *ātom*s by His will, just as the human soul produces activity or motion in the body through its will. There is invariable concomitance between volition and effect. Bodily activity may be a condition accompanying volition in some cases. So God, though devoid of body can create the world out of the *ātom*s by will²⁹.

5.2.2 God with a Divine Body: *Viśiṣṭādvaita*'s Position about God as the Cause of Creation

Viśiṣṭādvaitins firmly hold that God as the cause of creation is endowed with a body. The God of *Vaiṣṇavism* is not only a divine being endowed with numerous attributes par excellence but He also possesses an eternal, spiritual, divine body (*divya-maṅgaḷavighraha-viśiṣṭa*). Such a bodily form for *Īśvara* is admitted on the authority of numerous scriptural and *Smṛti* texts. The *Puruṣa-sūkta* of *Ṛgveda* describes God as a personal Being with thousand heads, thousand eyes, and thousand legs³⁰. The repeated references to three strides of *Viṣṇu* in the *Ṛg* hymns imply a body for the deity. The hymns of the *Ṛgveda* also speak of the Lord as having His eyes in all places, His faces in all

directions, His arms in all directions³¹. The *Ch.Up.* says that *Puruṣa* (*Brahman*) is *Hiraṇmayah* or brilliant like gold, with eyes like the fresh blossomed lotus³². The *Itihāsās* and *Puraṇās* portray God as a personal being wearing the weapons such as discus (*cakra*), conch (*śaṅkh*), club (*gada*), sword and bow and decorated with various ornaments³³. The hymns of the *Alvars* also emphasizes the aesthetic aspect of Divine Being in their mystic outpourings. Based on such descriptive accounts of the Godhead Rāmānuja in the *Gadyās* presents a vivid and enchanting description of the divine personality of God (*divyarūpa*), His divine ornaments (*divya-bhūṣaṇa*) and His divine weapons (*divyāyudha*). There are many philosophic justifications for accepting a bodily form to *Brahman*, the ultimate reality. It would not be philosophically sound to conceive Reality as an impersonal Being, as pure sat, cit and *ānanda*. The *Upaniṣads* declare that Reality is devoid of hands, feet etc. at the same time it does not hold the postulation of a beautiful personality for the metaphysical ultimate Reality amount to anthropomorphism. These are important issues of philosophy and need to be examined.

Regarding the metaphysical issue relating to the nature of the ultimate Reality, it may appear sounder, prima facie, to

conceive it as a pure transcendental being devoid of attributes and bodily form. But what is transcendental in the strict metaphysical sense cannot have any relation to the universe. Such a Reality cannot be the cause of the universe because creation, protection and dissolution of the universe, the three important functions of primary causal Being as enunciated in the *Upaniṣad*, need knowledge, power and mental activity in the form of desire or will (*sañkalpa*) to create. If we attribute these functions to an ultimate Reality, then the latter would invariably become a personal Being endowed with knowledge and divine power. The absolute monist overcomes these difficulties by postulating the concept of *Māya*, a principle to account for the phenomenal appearance of universe and defend the theory of pure undifferentiated being as the highest metaphysical Reality. But such a theory according to the *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, is riddled with logical contradictions. Besides, epistemologically the existence of an absolutely undifferentiated entity, whether it is ontological or physical, is impossible because all entities in the universe are characterized. Further, a transcendental Being does not meet the religious needs. The main goal of religion in the context of the *Vedānta* is the realization of God through the liberation of the soul from bondage by means of *upāsana* (meditation). The

impersonal Being cannot serve the object of meditation. A Reality possessing a bodily form is alone suitable for meditation. Even the Absolutists have to admit in order to meet the needs of religion, a personal God in the name of *Saguṇa Brahman*. But such a divine being, though it may serve the practical needs of religion, does not enjoy the status of being absolutely real. In view of all these considerations Rāmānuja has equated *Brahman* of the *Upaniṣads* with *Puruṣōtṭama*, a personal God of Religion.

Nityavibhūti is admitted as one of the six metaphysical categories of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*. Vedānta Deśika defines it as a substance constituted of pure *Sattva*, while it is different from the cosmic matter comprising the three *guṇās*³⁴. It is also defined as a substance constituted of pure *Sattva*, while being self luminous. According to this definition, the first essential characteristic of *Nityavibhūti* is that it should be constituted of pure *Sattva*. *Sattva* generally refers to one of the three qualities of cosmic matter, viz., *Sattva*, *rajās* and *tamās*. *Prakṛti* and all its material products are always characterized by these qualities in varying proportion. It is not this *Sattva* quality that is referred to by the term of Śuddha-*Sattva* of *Nityavibhūti*. On the contrary it refers to a different type of *Sattva* that is regarded as absolutely free from the tinge of *rajās* and *tamās*. This would mean that

there are two types of *Sattva-śuddha* which does not possess even in the slightest degree rajas and *tamas* and *śuddha* which is associated with rajas and *tamas*.³⁵ The *Prakṛti* and all its evolutes is characterized by the latter, whereas the pure *Sattva* consists of the former. This brings out the second characteristic of *Nityavibhūti*, viz., that it is other than *Prakṛti* comprising three *guṇās* it is, therefore, characterized as *svayam prakāśa* or self luminous to emphasize the spiritual character of *śuddha Sattva* as contrasted with the material substance.

According to the *Viśiṣṭadvaita*, *Nityavibhūti* is infinite in so far as its upper limit is concerned. As regards the lower limit, it does not extend beyond the cosmic universe constituted of three *guṇās*.³⁶ As the *Puruṣa sūkta* states, the physical universe covers only a small part (*pāda*) of *Viṣṇus vibhūti* (glory). *Pāda* or part implies as explained in the *Gīta* that the physical universe is brought forth from a small particle of God's infinite energy³⁷. But the rest of His glory permeates the entire higher region. On the basis of this one of the *Pañcarātra Saṃhitas* describes that the realm of God is known as *Vaikuṇṭha*, which is infinitely extensive and that the infinite glory of the Lord manifests itself in the *Nityavibhūti*.

The *Pañcāratra Saṃhitas* and *Vaiṣṇava* treatise present a highly attractive account of the abode of *Viṣṇu* known as *paramapada* or *Vaikuṇṭha-lōka*. It consists of beautiful castles with towers, halls with thousand pillars etc., and also laid out with enchanting flower garden, trees, streams, lakes etc. According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita-Vedānta*, the ultimate Reality is a personal Supreme Being that implies a concept of God with a body (*vigraha*). An impersonal God or an undifferentiated pure being without any form (*nirākāra*) does not serve the purpose of meditation and worship by the devotees.

5.2.3 God with a Divine Body: *Dvaitin*'s Position about God as the Cause of Creation

Madhva develops his views on the body of *Viṣṇu* in the context of his anti-*Śaivite* stance. The polemic against *Śaivism* formed an essential part of the *Vaiṣṇava* teaching for centuries³⁸. The Brahma-sutras on which Madhva comments have an attack on the old *Śaiva-Pāśupata* teaching,³⁹ though they attack also the old *Vaiṣṇava Pañcāratra* doctrines. While commenting on the *Pāśupatyādhikaraṇa* of the *BS* (that part of the *BS* which attacks the *Pāśupatās*)⁴⁰ Madhva tries to prove that Siva is not the Absolute Being and therefore he cannot be the cause of the

origination of the world. According to the *Śaivates*, *Rudra* is a bodiless being.⁴¹ “Since *Śiva* is bodiless, he cannot have any causal relation to the world”, says Madhva.⁴² What Madhva intends to say by this statement is that only an embodied being can enter into a causal relation with another being. Madhva compares a bodiless being to a corpse⁴³. A bodiless being is inactive. Trivikrama explains that this argument is taken from experience⁴⁴. Our experience tells us that only embodied being like a potter acts as cause. Experience moreover shows us that a cause before it acts must place itself on a ground and this evidently is possible only if the cause has a body.⁴⁵ The *Vaiṣṇava* philosophical tradition states that only an embodied being can really act and act purposefully. It is from the motion of the body we come to know of activity. Certainly, the spirit is the ultimate source of activity and intention. But it is only from the movements of the body and from the position it takes and the direction towards which it tends the activity of the spirit remains revealed.

Madhva’s argumentation indirectly throws light on his doctrine of causality. It is clear that for Madhva, *Viṣṇu*’s causality does not consist in the production of a totally new

being. Madhva tries to understand and interpret the causality of *Viṣṇu* on the model of the activity of embodied beings which act on pre- existing matter. Since the elements on which the agent acts are material, it is necessary that the agent to be endowed with a body.

Madhva teaches that *Viṣṇu* fulfills the conditions necessary for the production of the world because he has a body. That *Viṣṇu* is endowed with a body and that he is the cause of the world is a truth that we know only from the sacred texts. Madhva cites an unknown work called *Pañgīśruti* in support of his teaching that *Viṣṇu* has a body. ‘He (*Viṣṇu*) has an intellect, he has a mind, he has members and submembers’,⁴⁶ and further he states that: ‘he has a good body, he is sweet smelling, he has luminous knowledge and has great power’.⁴⁷ So the *Vedic* testimony as well as reasoning based on sacred tradition proves that *Viṣṇu* has a body. Madhva incorporates into his system all the mythological statements on the body of *Viṣṇu*, which are to be found in the *Vaiṣṇava* texts. In the *BSMB* it is said that *Brahman*’s (*Viṣṇu*’s) head, arms and trunk are made out of being, knowledge and bliss.⁴⁸ At the same time, Madhva teaches that the attributes and the members of *Viṣṇu* are not distinct from

one another or from *Viṣṇu*. They all form just ‘one being’ identical with itself and different from all other beings.

Rāmānuja’s teaching that the souls and matter form the body of *Viṣṇu* is not acceptable to Madhva. Souls and matter do not form the body of *Viṣṇu*. In *BSMB*.I.4.1 Madhva quotes the *Kaṭh.Up* text (III, II) in support of his position. There the word ‘*avyakta*’ means ‘*Prakṛti*’ (matter). Madhva thinks that it primarily signifies *Viṣṇu* because matter is dependent on *Viṣṇu*. The dependence of matter and souls on *Viṣṇu* and the indwelling of *Viṣṇu* in both, in matter and in souls, give us the certain right to say that matter and souls form the body of *Viṣṇu*.⁴⁹

5.3 God as the Giver of Liberation

In this section of comparative analysis we highlight the point that God is the Giver of Liberation. Almost all the Indian philosophical schools excepting *Carvāka* present the theme of liberation as their ultimate aim of philosophizing. *Naiyāyikas*, *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* and *Dvaitins* are not an exception to this general trend of Indian philosophical systems. In their philosophical discussions they specifically focus their attention on the notion of liberation.

5.3.1 God as the Giver of liberation: *Viśiṣṭādvaita*'s Position

According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, the souls bound on account of their ignorance and *Karma*. Rāmānuja's notion of *Karma* insists that the *Karma* should be performed in an absolutely disinterested manner simply to please God. The soul performs its actions. We realize that the performance of actions alone cannot lead one to liberation. Hence one has to turn towards the study of the *jñānakāṇḍa*, which teach us the nature of God, soul and matter. The soul will realize that matter and souls qualify God who is their inner ruler that they form the body of God who is the real soul. Rāmānuja admits that knowledge is the immediate cause of liberation but this knowledge is real knowledge not the ordinary verbal knowledge.

The real knowledge is identified by Rāmānuja with the highest *Bhakti* or devotion, which is obtained by *Prapatti* or self- surrender and by constant remembrance of God as the only object of devotion. Rāmānuja identifies the highest *bhakti* as the real *jñānopāsana*. This is the means to attain the pure *jñāna*. *Prapatti*, which functions as the bridge between the ordinary *bhakti* and pure *jñāna* guarantees the immediate intuitive

knowledge of God, which is the direct cause of liberation that dawns only by the *prasāda* of God.

Though Rāmānuja emphasizes the role of *bhakti* to God in liberation, according to Him, *bhakti* is not the emotional love of God. He asserts that liberation is not the merging of the individual soul into the absolute; rather it is the direct intuitive realization by the individual soul of its own essential nature as a mode of God. In Rāmānuja's view this realization pre-supposes two things: (a) the utter destruction of the *Karmas* by which the soul acquires its innate purity and (b) the dawning of the divine grace which transforms constant meditation into the immediate intuition of God. Hence for Rāmānuja there is no *jīvanmukti* for as long as the soul remains associated with the body the *Karmas* persists and as long as the *Karma* persists, the soul cannot acquire its innate purity. In Rāmānuja's view there is no liberation without grace for unless the divine grace dawns the constant meditation cannot mature into real *bhakti*, which means the immediate intuitive knowledge of God and unless this real knowledge dawns, liberation cannot take place. The removal of all *Karmas* and the emergence of immediate knowledge of God take place simultaneously and not successively. Both are

produced at once by the Divine grace which itself originate on account of *Prapatti* and *Upāsana*.

According to Rāmānuja, the liberated soul does not become identical with *Brahman* but it remains only similar to *Brahman*. It realizes itself as the body of *Brahman* and ever dwells in direct communion with God. It enjoys like God the infinite consciousness and the infinite bliss. Though the liberated soul in essence becomes similar to God, it differs from Him in two important respects. The liberated soul is *ātoṃic* and finite. It does not share with God His immanent controlling power and His transcendent power of being the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. From the aforesaid explanations it is obvious that God is the giver of liberation according to *Viśiṣṭādvaita* system.

5.3.2 The Role of God in Liberation: *Dvaita*'s Position

In the system of Madhva, *Viṣṇu* is the giver of liberation. Just as creation and support of the universe, and just as union of the soul to matter and its veiling by ignorance are from *Viṣṇu*, so is the freeing of the soul from the fetters of transmigration the work of *Viṣṇu*.⁵⁰ According to Madhva, *Viṣṇu* is the giver of both *jñāna* and *mukti*. In his commentary on the *VTV*, Jayatīrtha

writes that *Viṣṇu* alone produces knowledge and the release of the good souls.⁵¹ The final liberation as the work of *Viṣṇu* is expressed in different ways by Madhva. ‘Without the favour of *Viṣṇu* liberation cannot be attained.’⁵² ‘To the ignorant *Viṣṇu* grants knowledge, to the knower release and to the released he grants bliss.’⁵³ *Viṣṇu* alone can be the giver of final release because it is he who has bound the soul to the state of transmigration

Liberation is called by Madhva the highest end of man. The other three objectives, right conduct (*dharma*), wealth (*artha*) and family love (*kāma*) are ephemeral. They are not unmixed good. They are mixed with pain. Liberation alone is the ultimate and unmixed good of man. In the thought of Madhva, liberation has got both a negative and a positive aspect: Liberation is freedom from something. In the same way it is also the attainment of something. In the *BSMB* III.I.1. Madhva says that liberation is the soul’s freedom from the material elements to which it is chained.

We have already seen that Rāmānuja advocates qualitative monism and quantitative pluralism of the souls believing that all souls are essentially alike. But Madhva

advocates both quantitative and qualitative pluralism of souls. In his view no two souls are alike. Each has besides its individuality, its peculiarity also. Madhva therefore believes that even in liberation the souls differ in degrees regarding their possession of knowledge and enjoyment of bliss (*ānandatāratamya*).

5.3.3 The Role of God in Liberation: *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika's* Position

We have already seen that in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system God is the efficient cause of creation. As He is the efficient cause God functions as the directive cause of the actions of all living beings. This indicates that all creatures are only relatively free. This means that it is under the direction and guidance of the Divine Being that one does one's actions. In *Nyāya* system God as the directive cause directs all living beings to do their actions and to feel natural consequences thereof consistent with their past conducted character. Just as man is the efficient instrumental cause of one's own actions, God is their efficient directive cause. *Nyāya* asserts that God is the moral governor of the world of living beings including our selves, the impartial dispenser of the

fruits of our actions and the supreme arbiter of our joys and sorrows.⁵⁴

Liberation is explained in *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* systems negatively. For *Naiyāyikas* *apavarga* or liberation is absolute freedom from pain. This implies that it is a state in which the soul is released from all the bonds of its connection with the body and the senses. According to *Nyāya* system, liberation as the negation of pain is not explained in the sense of a suspension of it for a longer or shorter period of time. It is absolute freedom from pain for all time to come.

To attain liberation one must acquire a true knowledge of the self and all other objects of experience. He must know that the self is distinct from the body, the mind and the senses. With the realization of the true knowledge a man becomes free from desires and impulses. Thus he ceases to be affected by the effects of his present actions done with no desire for fruits. As his past *Karmas* or deeds being exhausted by producing their effects the individual has to undergo no more birth in this world. The cessation of birth means the end of his connection with the body and consequently of all pain and suffering and that is liberation.⁵⁵

Nyāya's position about God's role in liberation is limited to the role of efficient directive cause of *adr̥ṣṭa* only. As *Nyāya* proposes the notion of liberation negatively it is meaningless to enquire about the positive role of God in granting liberation to a person. The liberation is attained by the cessation of all kinds of bonds that tie a person to the world. God is involved, according to *Nyāya* system, only in moving the effects produced by the ties and bonds of a person to the world. These are the points we can say about God's positive role as the efficient directive cause of creation in the *Nyāya's* explanations about it. In tune with its whole theoretical positions God is kept silent in its role to guarantee the liberation.

5.4 God and His Relation to the Individual Souls

Any attempt to do a comparative analysis of the theistic positions held by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* schools cannot ignore their standpoint regarding God and His relation to individual souls. These schools express different opinions about such a relation. This section of the thesis initiates to enquire about the varying positions proposed by these schools about God's relation to individual souls.

5.4.1 God and His Relation to the Individual Souls:

Nyāya's Position

The individual souls and God belong to the genus 'Soul'. They are substances endowed with spiritual qualities. Knowledge, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition, merit, demerit and disposition are the qualities of the individual souls. They are their acquired qualities which are temporary. Eternal knowledge, happiness, desire, volition and merit are the qualities of God. Some thinkers in this system deny happiness and merit to God. Both individual souls and the supreme soul possess the generic qualities of number, magnitude, distinctness, conjunction and disjunction. Both are ubiquitous substances. Both are eternal. God is not the creator or destroyer of the individual souls.

There is no identity between God and the individual souls. There is no identity-in-difference between them. The individual souls have neither parts nor qualities nor modes of God. They are co-eternal substances belonging to the same genus.

But God is omniscient, omnipotent and all perfect, while the individual souls have fragmentary knowledge, limited powers, and moral imperfections. God is free from pain,

aversion, false knowledge, attachment, delusion, inadvertence, demerit and disposition, while the individual souls possess them all. God has eternal supernatural powers, while the individual souls are ordinarily devoid of them, but can acquire them to a limited extent. God has eternal moral perfection, while the individual souls acquire moral perfection by severe moral discipline and true knowledge. God is neither bound nor liberated, while the individual souls are bound first and then attain liberation. God is never in bondage, and consequently cannot attain liberation.⁵⁶

5.4.2 The complete Distinction between *Viṣṇu* and the souls: Madhva's position

According to Madhva, this universe (hence the souls also) is real. This means that the universe has a reality distinct from the reality of *Viṣṇu*. The reality of the universe is dependent on *Viṣṇu* but it is not the reality of *Viṣṇu*. Madhva clearly assigns opposing attributes to *Brahman* and the soul. *Brahman* or *Viṣṇu* is omniscient (*sarvajñā*) and omnipotent (*sarvaśakta*). But soul or *jīva* has little knowledge (*alpajñā*) and has only very little power (*alpaśakta*). *Brahman* (*Viṣṇu*) is independent (*svatantra*). *Brahman* (*Viṣṇu*) is the indwelling

principle (*antaryāmin*). Soul (*jīva*) is the one with ever realized desires (*satyakāma*, *āpatakāma*). Soul (*jīva*) is the one whose desires are not fully realized (*kāmyakāma*).

It is quite clear that *Viṣṇu* and the soul cannot possibly be identical. The sacred texts too, Madhva thinks, proclaim with one voice the difference between *Viṣṇu* and the souls. The so called ‘identity texts’ such as ‘*aham Brahmāsmi*’, or ‘*tat tvam asi*’ do not teach monism. Let us take for example the text ‘*tat tvam asi*’ which is repeated nine times in the 6th chapter of *Ch.Up.* Madhva asks his opponent to read the text and interpret it according to the spirit of the text. If he were to do so he would realize that it means not ‘*tat tvam asi*’ but ‘*atat tvam asi*’ (thou art not that). In fact, the father of *Śvetaketu* is telling his son that the individual is not identical with *Brahman*. The *Advaitin* is misreading the text when he reads it as ‘*tat tvam asi*’. All the examples given by the father teach in fact the reality of this distinction.⁵⁷ Just as the bird and the rope are different, the fruits of the many trees are different, the rivers and the sea are different, the thief and the property stolen are different, the man and the *Gāndhāra* country are different, so the soul and God are different.

Such text as ‘I am *Brahman*’ must be interpreted in relation to the inner ruler: the inner ruler of the soul is *Brahman*.⁵⁸ Madhva rejects too the so-called ‘*ekajīvavāda*’ of the *Advaitins*, which states that there is only one soul in the world. All the other souls are considered to be the imaginary or dream products of this one *jīva*.⁵⁹

The individual souls are different from the *Paramapuruṣa* and also from each other. In the *Viṣṇutattvavinirṇaya* Madhva defines soul as ‘the *jīva* (individual soul). It is defined there as the one cognizable verily by the ‘I’ consciousness. He experiences both pain and pleasure and is subject to bondage and release⁶⁰. The relation of soul with *Brahman* is explained by Madhva as *bim̐bapratibim̐babhāva* (relation of the original and reflection). Madhva’s explanation of the relation is unique. To Madhva this relation of *bim̐bapratibim̐ba* between God and soul is a sacred and inviolable relation that is true for all time and goes to the very core of the *jīva* and constitutes his very essence and could never be annulled or transcended. *Pratibim̐batva* is not a false relation about which the *jīvas* are to be ashamed of and should try to shake off. It is the truest and the most beautiful permanent bond with the Supreme Being. This relation

emphasizes an essential eternal metaphysical dependence of *jīvas* on God.

5.4.3 The Individual Soul is *Aṃśa* or Part of the Qualified Whole: *Viśiṣṭādvaita*'s Position

The individual soul is the cit element of the body of the Lord. Rāmānuja says that individual souls are real and many. In the B.G. it has been said that “I, the Supreme Self and Lord of all an eternal, likewise, you (Arjuna and others) who are embodied selves, also should be considered eternal”. Rāmānuja explains that “The difference between the Lord, the sovereign over all and the individual selves and also difference among the individual selves is real. This has been declared by the Lord himself. For different terms like I, you, these, all we, have been used by the Lord while explaining the truth of eternality in order to remove the ignorance of Arjuna, who has deluded by ignorance.”⁶¹

The individual soul is *aṃśa* or part of the Lord in the sense that it is His inseparable attribute and an attribute is a part of the qualified whole. As the body obeys the soul, so both souls and matter obey the Lord. Its special characteristics in relation to *Īśvara* are *śeṣatva* (dependence) or *paratantratva* (subservience) or *vidheyatva* (the quality of being supported) and *ādheyatva* (the

quality of being controlled). *Brahman* is both the embodied soul as well as the body.

Blissful in itself *Brahman* becomes the doer, the enjoyer, the embodied one and the body itself. From the point of view of *Prakṛti* it becomes the embodied Self and from the point of view of God it becomes the body itself⁶².

Each self is an *ātomīc* quantum of knowledge and consciousness. It is *dharmabhūtajñāna* (consciousness as substance). Consciousness also functions as an attribute of the soul, as *dharmabhūtajñāna*, and in this role 'I' is liable to expansion and contraction. The awareness of the soul increases or decreases according to the predominant quality of the matter with which it is in contact and this in turn is largely the fruit of his past *Karmas*.

The individual soul has to obey the Lord and at the same time he has the freedom of will. The Lord makes the soul act by granting him permission, taking into consideration the efforts put forth by him, but action is not possible for the soul without His permission. Though the permission of the Lord is essential, the responsibility for the initial volition is of the soul himself. Lord empowers or rewards those who are resolved to be virtuous by

abiding them in this resolve and makes those who are resolved on evil actions take greater delight in such actions which drag them downwards.

To Rāmānuja the law of *Karma* and the operation of divine grace are not inconsistent. By observing strictly the rules and regulations ordained by *śāstras* in respect of duties of different classes and stages of life the souls can better their position by performing their *Karmas* in a spirit of dedication to the Lord Himself.

Individual soul or jīva : *Jīva* in the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* is presented as *aṇu* or monadic in substance. The main justification for accepting this view is that the *Upaniṣads* describe *jīva* as infinitesimal. Thus says the *Mun.Up.* ‘ This ātman is *aṇu* and to be known by mind.’⁶³ The *Śv.Up.* describes the self as infinitely smaller than the hundredth part of the point of a hair divided a hundred times and yet it is infinite in range.⁶⁴ The *Br.Up.* speaks of the exit of *jīva* from the body after death⁶⁵. If the *jīva* were *Vibhu* or all pervasive as *Naiyāyikas* believe such a movement is inconceivable. What is *Vibhu* cannot have any movement. If it were of the size of the body of the individual which it occupies,

as the *Jainas* believe, it would be subject to mutation corresponding to the sizes of the bodies it occupies.

In order to overcome all these difficulties, the *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta* upholds the theory of *jīva* as *aṇu* on the strength of the *Upaniṣādic* authority.⁶⁶ Even though *jīva* is not infinitesimal, its attribute knowledge (*jñāna*) possesses the intrinsic capacity of becoming infinite (*Vibhu*) in the state of *mokṣa* after it becomes totally free from *Karma* as stated in the *Ch.Up.*⁶⁷ In *Viśiṣṭādvaita jīvas* are classified into three types belonging to two classes: *baddhas* or those in bondage and *nityas* or those which are eternally free. The *baddha jīvas* are not omniscient as their knowledge is subject to contraction and expansion due to the influence of *Karma*, whereas the other two types of *jīva* are omniscient being totally free from obstructive factors.

The *Nyāya* regards the self as ubiquitous. But it has experience only in conjunction with the body which is the vehicle of experience. In each body there is a unique self⁶⁸. There is infinite number of souls. If there were only one self, as the *Advaita-Vedānta* holds, the experiences of one person would be shared by all others, and bondage or release of one might guarantee the liberation of others as well. Hence there is a unique soul in each body. It is all pervading. It cannot have a

limited magnitude, since what is limited has parts and is therefore destructible. It is not atomic as Rāmānuja and Madhva holds. If it were *ātoṃic*, it could not have consciousness in connection with the whole body and could not perceive its qualities, since qualities of atomic substances are imperceptible. It cannot be of intermediate magnitude. It cannot be larger or smaller than the body, if it were so it could not occupy the body and pervade it. It cannot be co-extensive with the body as the *Jaina* holds. If it were so, it would be too small for the body which grows and develops. Again, a human soul could not transmigrate into an ant's body or an elephant's body. Hence the self is all pervading. But it cannot apprehend many things simultaneously owing to the atomic nature of *manas*, which is its internal organ. Each soul has one *manas* only that persists throughout its empirical life. It is separated from the *manas* in the state of liberation.

The self has experience in connection with *manas* which is the internal organ. The *manas* is atomic. The self perceives its qualities, viz., cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion and volition through the *manas*. It perceives eternal objects and their qualities, colour, sound, taste, smell, heat, cold etc through the external sense-organs. The external sense-organs

are supervised by the *manas*. The *manas* does not come into contact with the external objects and their qualities. Again, if the self does not come into contact with the *manas*, it cannot have either internal perception or external perception. Both *manas* and external senses are organs of the self. They are its instruments of knowledge. The external senses are the instruments of its external perception. The *manas* is the instrument of its internal perception. It is also the instrument through which the self has other kind of valid knowledge, viz., inference, comparison, and testimony. The self is the agent. The *manas* and the external sense organs are its instruments. Hence the self cannot be identified with the *manas* and the external sense organs. The agent is quite different from its instruments.⁶⁹

5.5 God as Endowed with Attributes

The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣadtādvaita* and *Dvaita* assert that *Īśvara*, the lord of Universe is *Saguṇa* or qualified. They deny the existence of the *nirguṇa* or characterless *Brahman* accepted as the Absolute in *Śaṅkara-Vedānta*. *Īśvara* is endowed with the attributes of existence, knowledge and bliss.

5.5.1 Attributes of God : *Viśiṣṭādvaita*'s Position

In the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* System *Brahman* is endowed with all auspicious qualities and is antagonistic to all that is evil (*Kalyāṇaikatāna* and *heyapratyanīka*). Taking the root verb *br̥h* 'to grow', the term etymologically means that which grows (*br̥hati*) and causes to grow (*br̥hmayati*). This meaning is upheld by the Scriptural text.⁷⁰ The two epithets *br̥hatva* and *br̥hmaṇatva*, which convey the primary import of the term *Brahman* signify that which possesses infinite greatness both in respect of its intrinsic nature (*svarūpa*) and attributes (*guṇataḥ*) is *Brahman*. These two attributes are applicable only to the Supreme-personal-being (*Sarveśvara*) and not to an undifferentiated being (*Nirviśeṣa-Brahma*). In view of this, Rāmānuja states that the term *Brahman* denotes *Puruṣottama* or Supreme Personal being who by its very nature is free from all imperfections (*nirasta-nikhila-doṣaḥ*) and possesses infinite auspicious attributes of unsurpassable excellence. (*anantakalāṇa-guṇagaṇaḥ*)⁷¹ The concept of *Puruṣottama* as qualified by the two specific attributes distinguishes *Brahman* from every other being such as *Caturmukhabrahmā* and Rudra, the individual souls including those which are eternally free and even the

Nirguṇa and *Saguṇa Brahman* of the *Advaita-Vedānta* because none of these is totally free from defects and possesses unsurpassable attributes⁷²

5.5.2 Attributes of God : *Dvaita*'s Position.

In the *Dvaita*, *Brahman* is endowed with all perfect innumerable qualities (*Sarvagūṇapūrṇatvaṃ*) and devoid of evil qualities (*Sarvadoṣagandhavidhuratvaṃ*). The Independence of *Viṣṇu* is the root of this defect-lessness and perfections. Madva says that: “An independent being is not touched by defects, for it is independent”.⁷³ A dependent being is incapable of acquiring all that it desires or of avoiding all that it dislike. Since *Viṣṇu* is absolutely free, i.e., since no other being is equal or superior to him, no harm can come to him. Thus for example, though *Viṣṇu* is present in hell, yet he is untouched by suffering because of his independence.⁷⁴ In the words of Jayatīrtha: “The Lord is the fullness of all perfections and far removed from all defects for he is free”.⁷⁵

5.5.3 Attributes of God : *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*'s position

In the *Nyāya-Sūtra*, there is no clear reference to the attributes of *Īśvara*. The *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras* are also totally silent on this point. The process of creation and dissolution as detailed

by Praśastapāda in his *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* says that *Īśvara* is endowed with the qualities of desire and will.

Vātsyāyana in his *Nyāya Bhāṣya* contends that *Īśvara* is a special type of self endowed with attributes. (*guṇaviśiṣṭam ātmāntaram Īśvaraḥ*). He gives a list of divine attributes where he recognizes knowledge as the only special attribute and *icchā*, *prayatna*, *dharma* and *samādhi* as his general attributes. Besides, *Īśvara* is said to be endowed with eight *aiśvaryas* or powers, such, as *aṇima*, *laghimā* etc.⁷⁶

5.6 Proofs for the existence of God.

In this section we deal with the comparison possible between the *Nyāya*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* systems regarding the proofs for the existence of God. When we speak about the proofs of the existence of God it is simply assumed that it is possible to prove the existence of *Brahman* or God on the basis of logical arguments.

5.6.1. Proofs for the existence of God: *Nyāya*'s position

The *Naiyāyikas* puts forward many arguments for the existence of God. Udayana's arguments for the existence of God have become classical for theism and may be briefly noted here.

He gives the following nine arguments to prove the existence of God:

1. The world is an effect and hence it must have an efficient cause. This intelligent agent is God. The order, design, co-ordination between different phenomena comes from God (*kāryāt*).
2. The *ātoms* being essentially in-acting they cannot form the different combinations unless God gives motion to them. The Unseen Power, the *Adṛṣṭa*, requires the intelligence of God. Without God it cannot supply motion to the *ātoms* (*āyojanāt*).
3. The world is sustained by God's will. Unintelligent *Adṛṣṭa* cannot do this. And the world is destroyed by God's will (*dhṛtyādeḥ*).
4. A word has a meaning and it signifies an object. The power of words to signify their objects comes from God (*padāt*).
5. God is the author of the infallible *Veda* (*pratyayataḥ*).
6. The *Veda* testifies to the existence of God (*Śruteḥ*).
7. The *Vedic* sentences deal with moral injunctions and prohibitions. God is the creator and promulgator of the moral laws (*vākyāt*).

8. According to *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, the magnitude of a dyad is not produced by the infinitesimal magnitude of the two *ātoms* each, but by the number of the two atoms. Number ‘one’ is directly perceived, but other numbers are conceptual creations. Numerical conception is related to the mind of the perceiver. At the time of creation, the souls are conscious. And the *ātoms* and the Unseen Power and space, time, minds are all unconscious. Hence the numerical conception depends upon the Divine consciousness. So God must exist to make them function (*saṅkhyāviśeṣāt*).
9. We keep the fruits of our own actions. Merit and demerit accrue from our actions and the stock of merit and demerit is called *Adr̥ṣṭa*, the Unseen Power. But this Unseen Power, being un- intelligent needs the guidance of a supremely intelligent (God) (*adr̥ṣṭāt*)⁷⁷

The *Vedantins*, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka, Vallabha and all have rejected the *Nyāya* arguments and have fallen back on the *Śruti* alone for the existence of God.

5.6.2. Proofs for the existence of God : *Viśiṣṭādvaita*'s Position

According to the *Naiyāyikas* it is possible to establish the existence of God by means of logic. They have adopted among others the cosmological argument based on the idea of causation to prove the existence of God. Every effect must have a cause and the universe being an effect must have been produced by an agent or creator called *Īśvara*. The argument is expressed in the following syllogistic form: ‘The physical universe must have been caused by an agent, because it is an effect just as a pot.’⁷⁸ The *Vedāntins* reject the purely logical argument because it cannot conclusively establish the existence of the Supreme Being as conceived in the *Upaniṣads*. Besides it suffers from logical fallacies⁷⁹. All that can be proved by means of syllogistic argument is that a super-individual possessing unlimited capacity and knowledge is the creator of the universe, such as *Caturmukha-Brahmā*, a *Vedic* deity of lower order entrusted with the specific act of creation and therefore it does not lead us to the conclusion about an omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent *Īśvara* as distinct from *jīva*. Hence the author of the *Vedānta-Sūtra* asserts that Revealed Scripture alone is the Supreme

authority for our belief in the existence of God.⁸⁰ The reason for this claim is that neither perception nor logical argument can arrive at an unquestionable final conclusion in respect of matters which are super-normal. The author of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, therefore, asserts that *tarka* (logic) is inconclusive.⁸¹

This does not mean that the *Vedāntins* reject reasoning. They do accept it but it should not be the sole means of proof because in a matter which is super-normal such as God, or soul, it cannot establish it conclusively. *Śruti* or scripture should be taken as the final authority and logical arguments should be adopted to support Scripture. The sage Manu also supports this view. He says that: ‘A person who ascertains the teachings of the sages and those relating to dharma with the aid of the sound logical arguments which are not opposed to scripture, he alone truly knows the philosophic truth’.⁸² Though the philosophical doctrines of *Vedānta* are based on scriptural teachings, they are not irrational.

5.6.3 Proofs for the existence of God : Madhva’s Position

Madhva following the classical *Vedāntic* tradition holds the view that independent reasoning can never reach the certain cognition of the Absolute. We have now to analyze the *Dvaita*

refutation of the *Nyāya* contention that *Īśvara* can be known by means of inference.

God's existence cannot be proved by inference because the opposite also can be proved by inference. If it is argued that the world must have had a cause, because it is an effect like a jar, produced by a potter, it may be countered by a contradictory inference that the world could not have been produced by a creator because the world as a whole is not an effect as we conceive it, as the self (soul) is not 'created' by a cause like a potter. If it is objected that the counter inference is vitiated by the fact that it applies only to entities that are not effects like the self and not to the world as a whole, it can be answered with equal force that the first inference is vitiated by the fault that it applies only to products like a jar manufactured by embodied beings and not to the world as a whole.⁸³

In his *A. V. Madhva* writes that "an independent inference, that is, an inference not aided by *śruti* cannot prove the existence of God, because using the same method and with the same necessity one can show that being (cause) in question is only human and not God. Reasoning is not capable of reaching the Lord of the universe."⁸⁴ Again he argues that "reasoning is not

in any way capable of making known the lord”.⁸⁵ Commenting on this passage Jayatīrtha remarks in his *N.Su* that: “The Lord here stands for the cause of the world. The existence of such a Lord cannot in any way be proved by reasoning.”⁸⁶ What the *Dvaitins* means by these statements is that any reasoning which has its point of departure in the existence of the world can reach only ‘an artisan’ of the world similar to a human artisan. We can never prove that the cause of the world arrived at is God.

Madhva writes further that: “An inference which pretends to make known the supreme Lord is an inference surpassing its limits -*atiprasaṅga*. Such an inference would be like the statements - the horse has horns, or the sky has flowers, or the barren women have children etc because these are realities.”⁸⁷ As Jayatīrtha comments: ‘these reasoning suffer from the defect of ‘*atiprasaṅga*’ (surpassing its limits), that is, the reason adduced (*hetu*) is heterogeneous to the conclusion’.⁸⁸ In these quotations we have the substance of Madhva’s objections against the *Nyāya* proofs for the existence of the God. The arguments of Madhva do not need much explanation because they are clear in themselves. If we take the ‘principle of causality’ and the argument for the existence of God from the

‘product character’ of the world we find that Madhva implicitly limits the cause- effect relation to the empirical, verifiable sphere. For him the effects are pots, cloth etc., which are produced by embodied beings and which are immediately experienced by us as effects. The world as a whole, however, is never experienced by us as a product. This idea of cause and effect derived from sense experience and cause- effect relationship although, not directly perceived but inferred from the experience of invariable connection between a given type of cause and an effect, cannot be applied to supra-sensible realities. The world as a whole and its relation to a Supreme cause do not pertain to the sphere of the sensible. In the domain of the supersensible inference has no validity unless it is based on *Śruti*. Madhva would surely admit that every effect has a cause .What he denies is that the whole can be emphatically proved to be an effect. Moreover, the only causes we know of are embodied beings. These are usually human or secondary causes.

From the afore-stated explanation it is clear that Madhva does not consider the principle of causality known through perception within the frame-work of a philosophy of being but within the limited sphere of the particular idea of the sensible being. Of course, the *Vedas* can and do teach us that the Lord is

the cause of the world. The argument that the world calls for an Omniscient Cause is dismissed by Madhva on the ground that it is not really valid. Madhva admits that the cause of world knows the world but that the cause is omniscient is not proved.⁸⁹

Madhva does not explicitly consider the other arguments brought forward by the *Naiyāyikas* and refute them in his writings. Perhaps his contention is that an inference which pretends to make known the supreme Lord suffers from the defect of ‘*atiprasaṅga*’ is valid for other arguments also.

We may ask the question why Madhva did not develop the rational proofs for the existence of god, which to some extent and in undeveloped way are present in his writings. Madhva speaks of the limited and dependent character of the soul and the world. He speaks of the order in the world. In fact Madhva does indeed use these arguments to refute those schools which asserted that matter or the souls or the gods were the cause of the world. But positively, that is, in order to prove the existence of God, he does not use them.

Many are the reasons for this attitude of Madhva towards the use of *anumāna* to know god. First of all his *Vedāntic Vaiṣṇava* position did not allow him to show the least sympathy

to the *Nyāya* system, which asserted that God's existence and nature could be the object of reasoning and rejected the *Vedic* testimony. It may be good to remind ourselves that Rāmānuja also could not reconcile himself to the view that the Absolute Being could be the object of inference. Fideism and traditionalism form essential traits of *Vedāntic* Thought.

Madhva's idea of inference based on causality and for that matter, of inference in general, cannot be used to prove the existence of an absolute, spiritual being. The principle of causality as conceived by Madhva is only *adr̥ṣṭa* or *sāmānyatodr̥ṣṭa* principle and hence it embraces only a particular group of beings. Therefore this principle is inapplicable to supra-sensible realities.

The firm faith of Madhva that *Viṣṇu* alone is God did not allow him to make a distinction between the Absolute Being and the name by which the Absolute Being is called. No inference can tell us that *Viṣṇu* is the cause of the world. If Madhva had admitted that the Absolute Being could be known by inference, then the name by which that being is called e.g. Siva or *Viṣṇu* would have been of little importance. As a true Vaiṣṇava, Madhva could not separate the name *Viṣṇu* from the

Absolute Being. One knows from ‘*Śruti*’ alone that *Viṣṇu* is the Absolute Being and consequently one knows only from ‘*Śruti*’ that the world has a cause. Perhaps the most profound philosophical reason for the *Vedāntic* rejection of inference as a way to prove the existence of the Supreme Being is his transcendence. For all the *Vedāntins* the Absolute is the unlimited, the infinite and the incomprehensible. One cannot limit the Absolute reality by an appeal to causality or to order experienced in this world. Any proof for God’s existence, which ascends from a finite mind and which makes use of finite realities as the link with the Supreme Being will destroy his transcendence. The Absoluteness of the Supreme Being is more experienced by the inadequacy of the finite beings and of the human mind than by any proofs. Only a means of knowledge that surpasses the ordinary human sources of knowledge and that somehow has its roots in the Supreme Being himself can give us any genuine knowledge of him. It is remarkable to notice that Madhva does not explicitly contradict the *Nyāya* proofs for the existence of *Īśvara*. To contradict the proof directly may mean that the world has no cause, a view which Madhva rejects. What he tries to stress is the inconclusive character of the proofs.

According to him, the maker of the world, whom the proofs seek to establish, is not necessarily a God.

Though the Lord's reality cannot be demonstrated by sense perception or *anumāna*, still once it is revealed to us, both the above means of the knowledge can help us to realize ever more vividly that he is the basis of our experience of the world. So also rational demonstration can show that the knowledge of the lord we have from *Śruti* is not false. This general *Vedāntic* conviction is based on the implicit principle that reason and revelation do not contradict each other.

The above reasons though not explicitly expressed in any of his writings, seem to be at the bottom of Madhva's devaluation of reasoning. Despite what has been said, one should not suppose that reasoning is absolutely useless in our effort to know the Absolute Being. As already mentioned earlier, reasoning supported by '*Śruti*' can make *Viṣṇu* known to us. When we know from the sacred texts that *Viṣṇu* is the cause of the world, that the world is a product supported and destroyed by *Viṣṇu*, we can apply to these data of *Śruti* our categories of cause and effect and our syllogistic reasoning. In our ordinary reasoning validity is derived from the observed invariable

connection between ‘that which proves’ and ‘that which is to be proved’ (e.g. smoke and fire). But in a reasoning which is aided by ‘*Śruti*’, the validity ultimately comes from *Śruti* itself. It is ‘*Śruti*’ that tells us that the world is an effect and that *Viṣṇu* is the cause of this effect.

Reasoning has another function to perform in our effort to know the Absolute Being. In the study of the sacred texts we have to use reasoning in order to interpret them according to the right canons of interpretation⁹⁰. The above exposition of Madhva’s thought on the problem of the means through which *Viṣṇu* is known show that according to him the sacred texts alone can make *Viṣṇu* known to us. The other two means of knowledge namely, sense perception and inference have only a subordinate and auxiliary role to play in our search for the knowledge of *Brahman*. Madhva is particularly mistrustful of those who place their confidence in the power of reasoning⁹¹ As *Vedāntin* and *Vaiṣṇava*, he therefore, accept the doctrine that the sacred texts are the only means at our disposal to reach the knowledge of God, of liberation and of right conduct.

NOTES

- ¹ A.V., I.1.1
अस्योद्भावादित्...।
- ² B.S., I.1.2. AV, 1.1.89
अन्तःसमुद्रगं विश्वप्रसूतेः कारणं तु यत् जन्माद्यस्येति लक्ष्यते।।
- ³ Tat.Dī., p.202
- ⁴ Madhva's refutation of the Vaiśeṣika theory of the combination of atoms and the inner difficulties of that theory do not interest us here. A detailed exposition of the Madhva views may seen in B.N.K. Sharma
- ⁵ BSMB., II.2.17
श्रुतिस्मृति अपरिग्रहीतत्वात्।
- ⁶ Ibid., II.2.12.16
- ⁷ BSMB., II 2.12
वैदिकेश्वरस्य तु वेदेनैव सर्वशक्तित्वक्तेः सर्वं उपपद्यते ।
- ⁸ BSMB., II. 2.12.
स्वत एव काले विभेदाङ्कितेश्च।
- ⁹ Tat.Dī., P.205
सम्प्रति सुजामि पश्चात् संहारिष्यामीति विशेषेच्छादिकं उपपद्यते।
- ¹⁰ Tai.Up., II.6
- ¹¹ A.V., I.4.58
न युक्तमीशितुः किञ्चिदीश्वरस्य विरोधि यत् यदीशत्वविरोधि स्यात्
तदेवायुक्तं ईशत्वस्य अविरोधेन योजयित्व अखिला : प्रमाः।
- ¹² BSMB., II.3.7
विभक्तत्वाज्य विकारित्वं युक्तं विकारिण एव लोके विभक्ता दृश्यन्ते।
- ¹³ Ibid., II.3.9
परतन्त्रविशेषो हि विकार इति कीर्तितः
अविकारोऽपि भगवान् सर्वशक्तित्व हेतुतः।
- ¹⁴ A.V., I. 4.58
- ¹⁵ A.V., I. 4.68
स न चेतनविकारः स्याद यत्र क्वापि ह्यचेतनं
नाचेतनविकारोऽपि चेतनः स्याद् कदाचना।
- ¹⁶ N.Su., I.4.68
यदि पुनः कारणस्वरूपानुगमम् अनन्तरेण विकारिविकारभावोऽभ्युपगम्येत
तदा चेतनोऽप्यचेतनविकारः किं नाभ्युपगन्तव्यः।
- ¹⁷ A.V., I.4.71
भागेन परिणामश्चेत् भागयोर्भेद एव हि।
- ¹⁸ A.V., I.4.66).
- ¹⁹ TS, P., 12
क्षित्यङ्कुरादिकं कर्तृजन्यं कार्यत्वाद् घटादिवत् ।
- ²⁰ SDS., p.12

- ²¹ TSD., p.13
उपादानगोचरापरोक्षज्ञानचिकीर्षाकृतिमत्त्वं कर्तृत्वम्।
- ²² NKS., Ch.v.p.p.54-55.
परामृष्टमेवादयोहि चेतनायोजिताः प्रवर्तन्ते अचेतनत्वात् वास्यादिवत्।
- ²³ NM., p.200.
ज्ञानचिकीर्षाप्रयत्नयोगित्वं कर्तृत्वमाचक्षते तच्चेश्वरे विद्यते ।
- ²⁴ NM., page 200
- ²⁵ NM.,p.197.
यद्यत् सन्निवेशविशिष्टं तत्तद् बुद्धिमत् कर्तृकम् ।
- ²⁶ It may be urged that the order and arrangement of the world differs from the order and arrangement of human productions. Therefore from the specific order and arrangement of the world, we cannot infer the existence of God as its creator. The Nyāya contends that there is an invariable concomitance between ‘order and arrangement in general’ and ‘the existence of a creator,’ just as there is an invariable concomitance between ‘smoke in general’ and ‘fire in general’. The smoke and the fire in a kitchen differ from the smoke and the fire in a forest. We disregard their specific peculiarities, and infer the existence of fire from the existence of smoke on the strength of the invariable concomitance between smokes in general and fire in general. Similarly, we infer the existence of God from the order and arrangement in general of the world as its creator on the strength of the invariable concomitance between ‘order and arrangement in general’ and the existence of a ‘creator’. सन्निवेशमात्रं कर्तृमात्रेण व्याप्तम् NM.p.p. 194-195. It may be urged that many effects are automatically produced; they are not found to be produced by a creator. The Nyāya contends that plants are produced by god. It cannot be proved that they are not produced by God. They possess inter mediate magnitude; they are neither atomic nor ubiquitous. They are arranged in an order .So they must be produced by a creayor; they cannot be produced by human agents. So they are produced by God (NM.,pp 196-97).
- ²⁷ YMD., p.130.
- ²⁸ BS., II . iii. 7, BSRB II. 3.18
अतः सर्वदा चिदचिद्वस्तु शरीर तस्य तत्प्रकारं ब्रह्म।
- ²⁹ NM.,p.202
- ³⁰ R.V., X.90.1
सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपति।
- ³¹ R.V., X.81.3. See also Sv.Up III.3.
विश्वतश्चर्क्षुयुत विश्वतो मुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पतिः।
- ³² Ch.Up I.6.6
- ³³ VP., I.22.76
अस्त्रभूषण संस्थान स्वरूपम्।
- ³⁴ N. Si., p.235
त्रिगुणद्वय व्यतिरिक्तत्वेसति सत्त्ववत्त्वम्।

- 35 N.Si., p.247
तत् द्विधा शुद्धं अशुद्धं च इति ।
- 36 N.Si.,p.235
- 37 B.G., X.42
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ।
- 38 *On the anti-Śaivism of the Vaiṣṇava-Purāṇas*, of P.Hacker.Prahlāda, Vol.II.
pp.166, 184 etc.
- 39 BS.,II.2.37-41
- 40 BSMB.,II.3.37-41)
- 41 *The Śivagamas teach that Śiva is bodiless*. S.Dāsgupta : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol.V.p.22
- 42 BSMB.,II.2.38
- 43 Ibid.,II.2.38
- 44 Tat.Di.,p.219
- 45 BSMB.,II.2.39
- 46 Ibid., II.2.41
बुद्धिमान् मनोमान् ।
- 47 Ibid., II.2.41
- 48 Ibid., II.2.41
- 49 Ibid., I.4.1
तस्यैव परतन्त्र्याश्चरीर रूपेव्यक्ते विन्यस्तस्य
परमात्मनायेवाव्यक्तशब्देन गृहीतः ।
- 50 Ibid., I.1.2
- 51 VTV.,Ti. p.343
सात्त्विकानां जीवानां मोक्षणम् ।
- 52 VTV., no.105
नाराणप्रसादं ऋते न मोक्षः ।
- 53 A.V .,15
अज्ञानं ज्ञानदो विष्णुं ज्ञानिनां मोक्षदश्च सःआनन्तदश्चमुक्तानाम् ।
- 54 N.Bh.,IV .1.21
- 55 Ibid., I.1.2
- 56 N.V., IV.1.21, p.470
- 57 VT V., no. 224.
- 58 Ibid., no.266
अहं ब्रह्मास्मि...अन्तर्यामि अपेक्षया ।
- 59 Ibid., No.309
- 60 VTV.,
अहमित्येव यो वेद्य स जीव इति कीर्तितः । स दुःखी स सुखी चैव स पात्रं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।
- 61 GBR.,II.12
एवं भगवतः सर्वेश्वराद् आत्मनां च परस्परं भेदः पारमार्थिकः इति भगवता एवोक्तमिति प्रतीयते ।
अज्ञानमेहितं प्रति तन्निवृत्तये पारमार्थिक नित्यत्वोपदेशसमये आहम् त्वम्, इमे, सर्वे, वयम्
इतिव्यपदेशात् ।।

- 62 YMD,
सतः सुखी उपाधिवशात् संसारात् अयं च कर्ता, भोक्ता, शरीरी, शरीरं च भवति ।
प्रकृत्यपेक्षया शरीरी, ईश्वरापेक्षया शरीरम् ।
- 63 Muṇ.Up., 3.1.9 eṣo aṇurātmā cetasā veditavyaḥ. According to the interpretation
of Rāmānuja, ātman in this text refers to jīvātman. See BSRB., II.3.23
- 64 Sv. Up., V.9 Vālāgrasatabhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca, bhāgo jīvassa
vijñeyah)
- 65 Br.Up., VI.4.2
- 66 BSRB., II.3.20 and II.3.23
- 67 Ch.Up., VII.26.2
- 68 N.Bh., III 1.15
- 69 Ibid., III . 1.12.16
- 70 SP., P.18 bṛhati bṛhmayati tasmād – ucyate parambrahma
- 71 BSRB., I.I.1
- 72 SP., I.I.1. p.17
- 73 Kāth.Up.Bh., p.18
स्वतन्त्रत्वात् स्वतन्त्रत हि नैव लिप्यते इति ।
- 74 BSMB., III.1.17
- 75 N.Su., II.1.115.
ईश्वरः सकलगुणपूर्णः सर्वदोषदूरश्च, स्वतन्त्रत्वात् ।
- 76 N.Bh., 4.1.21
धर्मज्ञानसमाधिसम्पदा च विशिष्टमात्मान्तरमीश्वरः
तस्य च धर्मसमाधिफलमष्ट विधैश्वर्यम् ।
- 77 NKS., V.1
- 78 TS., p.12
क्षित्यङ्कुरादिकं कर्तृजन्यं कार्यत्वाद् घटादिवत् ।
- 79 see FVV., pp 220-23
- 80 BS., I.1.2
जन्माद्यस्य यतः ।
- 81 Ibid., II.1.11
तर्काप्रतिष्ठानादपि ।
- 82 Manusmṛti, XII. 106
- 83 VTV., no.62
चानुमानात् तत्सिद्धिं विपर्ययेणाप्यमुमातुं शक्यत्वात्, विमतं सकर्तृकं
कार्यत्वात् घटवत् इत्युक्ते विमतं विकर्तृकं, अस्मत्
सम्मतकर्तृरहितत्वात् आत्मवत् इत्यनुमानविरोधात् अकार्यत्वं
उपाधिरित्युक्ते शरीरजन्यत्वं इतरत्रापियुपार्धि ।
- 84 A.V., 1.113-4
अप्रामाण्यानुमा च स्यान्नपृथक् चानुमेश्वरे
पुंस्त्वहेतुबलादेव पूर्वोक्तेनैव वर्तमाना ।

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- ⁸⁵ Ibid.,1.116
तर्को ज्ञापयितुं शक्तो नेशितारं कथञ्चन ।
- ⁸⁶ N.Su.,
ईशितारं जगत्कर्तारं कथञ्च सामान्यतो विशेषतश्च ।
- ⁸⁷ A.V.,1.1.11-119
- ⁸⁸ N.Su.,Īśvaranumānasya pramāṇatayam eteśam api prāmāṇyam syād iti śeṣaḥ.
Similar refutations of the proofs for the existence of God are to be found in the work of Rāmānuja. BSRB.1.1.3. The mīmāṃsakas refutes the arguments for the existence of God: “only embodied beings can produce something. Since God has no body, he cannot create the world. There is no possibility of proving that God is the creator of the world”. Jadunath Sinha. *A History of Indian Philosophy*.
- ⁸⁹ A.V.,II.117
किञ्चिज्ञात्वं हि पुंस्त्वेन शक्यं साधयितुं सुखम् ।
- ⁹⁰ Ibid.,123
उपक्रमादिलिङ्गोभ्यो नान्यास्यादनुमाततः ।
- ⁹¹ Madhva’s attitude towards those who placed their trust in the power of logic may be seen from the story quoted by him in his BSMB.II.2.17)

CONCLUSIONS

The thesis “THEISM IN THE NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA, VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA AND DVAITA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY” attempts to probe into the theistic positions adopted by some of the major philosophical traditions in India. Theism is generally understood as the faith in a Personal God who is deemed as the creator, preserver and the destroyer of the world. Those thinkers who are serious about the nature of the world, human beings, self etc., cannot but immerse themselves in the ever recurring question of an Ultimate Reality. They face deeper challenges in their rational philosophical attempts to confront this perennial question about the Ultimate Reality. The thinking about the Ultimate Reality need not always leads thinkers to consider it as having personal nature. But the history of thinking shows that there is always a strong tendency among thinkers in the world to regard this Ultimate Truth as having the

Divine Personal nature and it is closely linked to the aspirations of human heart for a higher realm of truth.

In India theism had been slowly developed by various Philosophical Schools in the course of history as is the case of it elsewhere. Generally, theism in the west had been by course of time disconnected from the rational attempts to get into the nature of the truth. It was demarcated as the area of religious preferences about which rationality has nothing to do with. But in India it had paced together with the serious philosophical thinking enterprises. For this matter Indian Philosophy was commonly considered in the west as the rational attempts performed by religious minded seers and monks. This thesis disagrees with such a western position about Indian Philosophy. By taking up this study this thesis adopts the stand point that the thinking about the Ultimate Reality indicates the sincere opening of the genuinely philosophical mind of a person. We can see that

India had contributed great thinkers who had seriously engaged with almost all the Philosophical questions that interested the minds of the thinkers elsewhere. Indian thinkers were not adamant about any of the questions with which they had confronted during their thinking course. In accordance with this general trend they were open about the questions regarding God also. This thesis tries to study the thinking routes of the theistic positions adopted in the vast history of Indian Philosophy. It chiefly concentrates on the theistic positions of the four major Philosophical Schools of Indian tradition. It begins its enquiry from the *Āryan* theistic considerations and moves to the positions taken up by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita*. The study ends with a comparative analysis of the theistic standpoints adopted by these Schools of thought.

The *Vedas* are the oldest extant literary monument of the *Āryan* mind. The origin of the theistic stand points of the Indian Philosophy can easily be traced in the *Vedas*. It is well known

that Indian Philosophy is based on reflective thinking subordinate to the authority of the *Vedas*. According to the Indian thinking the authority of the *Vedas* is due to the authority of God. Therefore it becomes categorical to begin its thinking about God. *Vedic* hymns, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads* thus give elaborate descriptions about the Divine. Later Philosophical schools seriously consider about the question of the nature and characteristic of the Divine and the role played by It in the interpretations about the Truth of the Reality.

Kaṇāda does not distinctly refer to God in the aphorisms. Praśastapāda refers to God and he describes how the world is created and destroyed by God. Gautama briefly refers to God in a few aphorisms. Later *Naiyāyikas* Vātsyāyana, Uddyotakara, Vācaspati Miśra, Udayana, Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, Gaṅgeśa and others are frankly theistic and elaborately discussed the proofs for the existence of God and the nature of God.

In the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* system *Brahman* or *Viṣṇu* is the Supreme Reality. *Jīva* and the World which are real are inseparably associated (*aprthaksiddha*) with *Brahman*. In *Dvaita Vedānta Brahman*, the Supreme Reality is the only independent

(*Svatantra*) entity. *Jīva* and the World are eternally separate and real. They always depend on the Brahman.

The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* schools accept God as the creator of the Universe. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* and *Dvaita* hold that God is merely an efficient cause (*kevala nimitta kāraṇa*) in creation. *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* accept God as the efficient, material and co-operative cause (*abhinnanimittopādāna sahakārīkāraṇa*) of the Universe. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* holds that God functions as efficient cause in creation without having a body. To *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* and *Dvaitins* God is endowed with a body and participates in creation as different causes.

To *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* *mokṣa* or liberation is absolute freedom from pain. To attain liberation one must acquire the true knowledge of the self and all other objects of experience. To *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* *mokṣa* is the soul's experiential realization of the Supreme Lord. The state of *mokṣa* is marked by doing service to the Lord. *Bhakti* or *Upāsana* is the Ultimate means of *mokṣa*. The released souls live in *Vaikuṇṭha* with a known material body enjoying omniscience and bliss. They accept only *Videhamukti*. The *Dvaita* system holds that *mokṣa* is a state of positive experience of his own innate blissfulness by the *Jīva*. According

to them, the four fold distinction of *mokṣa* is *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and *sāyūjya*. There is *tāratamya* (gradation) of bliss in *mokṣa*. The *aparokṣajñānin* is also known as *jīvanmukta*. Lord *Viṣṇu*'s grace in accordance with the aspirant's *bhakti* is the Ultimate means of *mokṣa*.

In the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, the individual souls and God belong to the genus soul. There is no identity between God and the individual souls. There is no identity-in-difference between them. There is absolute difference between them. The individual souls are neither parts nor qualities nor modes of God. The individual self is ubiquitous. In each body there is a unique self. The *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* accept the relationship between *Jīva*, the World and *Brahman* as *aṁsāṁsībhāva*, *śarīraśarīrībhāva*, *viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva*, *śeṣaśeṣībhāva*, *ādheyādhārabhāva*, *niyantyāniyantrībhāva* and *rakṣyarakṣakabhāva*. *Jīvas* are inseparable parts or modes of *Brahman*. *Jīva* is *aṇu* or *ātomīc* in size. The *Dvaita* system holds that the relationship between *Brahman* and *Jīva* is *bimbapratibimbabhāva*. Though *Jīva* is separate from *Brahman*, he is entirely dependent on *Brahman*. *Jīva* is an active and real agent. To Madhva like Rāmānuja, *Jīva* is *aṇu* or *ātomīc* in size.

The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* assert that the Lord is *saguṇa* or qualified. In the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* God is another soul endowed with qualities (*guṇaviśiṣṭam ātmāntaram Īśvaraḥ*). For *Viśiṣṭādvaitins*, God is endowed with all auspicious qualities and is antagonistic to all that is evil (*Kalyāṇaikatāna and heyapratyanīka*). The *Dvaita* system holds that God is endowed with all perfect innumerable qualities (*sarvagūṇapūrṇatvaṃ*) and devoid of evil qualities (*sarvadoṣa-gandha vidhuratvaṃ*). The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* proves the existence of God by inference. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and *Dvaita* prove the existence of God by *Śruti*.

This thesis holds the point that Theism is a perennial question in the history of Philosophical thinking. A comparative analysis of the theistic view points held by some of the major schools of Indian thought shows that there is a unity that underlies all the differences of thinking about God. Though the language of expressions and the approach of thinking are different, they all emphasize the Divine nature of the Ultimate Truth.

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